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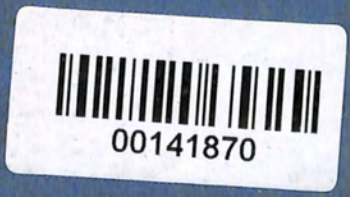

THE
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HISTORY

OF THE

NATIONAL

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.

FROM MAY 1848.

BY J. F. CORKRAN, ESQ.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

THE Author of this history had been for some months in almost daily attendance at the National Assembly, when, repeated questions put to him about the style, manner, and appearance of such members as were attracting public attention, suggested the idea of writing sketches, calculated in some degree to satisfy the curiosity of friends. A consideration of persons led naturally to an *exposé* of such subjects as had become identified with particular names; and as the recent Revolution has had the effect of throwing down all that had been taken for granted, and of causing most political and social questions to be brought into light and examining as if in themselves new a Work which aimed not beyond simple portraiture, unavoidably assumed a certain politico-philosophical texture. Having, for purposes of his own, taken notes of the many speeches he had heard, the Author can truly describe this to be an original effort at painting a

series of scenes, which it was given to but few of his countrymen to witness.

The debates of the Assembly, from the first day of meeting to the invasion by the Clubs on the 15th of May, and from that day to the Insurrection of June, receive daily notice, for the sake of showing how far the proceedings of this body tended to bring about that terrible struggle, in which the question at stake was—civilization itself. From that period, only such debates as serve to throw light on great or interesting questions, or to bring out remarkable individuals, are at all noticed. In fine, the Assembly chosen by Universal Suffrage, and occupied with questions of a political or social character, was composed of the most varied characters and persons. The parties known under the names of Republicans—Moderate and Red, Socialists, Communists, Bonapartists, and Monarchists, all enter readily into the reader's classification. Then for the *personnel*: there were men whose names had never before been heard of, by the side of well-established reputations: there were lawyers and doctors, from town and country; bishops, priests, friars, and *pasteurs*; nobles and workmen, even to the humblest *proletaire*. Not the least curious part of the study opened by such various persons, was the comparative effect produced by the new lamps and the old, on an Assembly

whose temper changed with its age, and was modified by the strangely shifting events with which it was bound up. Before it was a fortnight old, this Assembly had to withstand an assault upon its existence; later, again, it had to defend society from a fearful uprising of the masses, instigated and led by perverted intelligence and corrupted talents. So far, it was triumphant; but then it had to struggle, and in vain, against an heir of the Emperor, and it had to struggle against its own strong instinctive tendencies to become a Convention. To follow the Assembly through these struggles and efforts, to mark the men who influenced its career, for good or evil—such is the task into which the Author found himself almost insensibly drawn:—certain, at all events, that whatever may be the extent of his own failure to exhibit becomingly the drama, and the *dramatis personæ*, yet that if he has succeeded in making his sketches of a suggestive character to the reader's mind, his labour will not have been thrown away, nor his reader's time lost.

MAY, 1849.

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HISTORY

OF THE

NATIONAL CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.

CHAPTER I.

MEETING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY—ITS PHYSIOGNOMY—GENERAL COURTAIS' STRANGE PROPOSAL—PROCLAMATION OF THE REPUBLIC FROM THE STEPS OF THE CHAMBER.

It was an extraordinary sight, the meeting of the French National Assembly on the 4th of May, 1848. How unlike in its composition to what is generally understood by a House of Commons, or Chamber of Deputies, returned by constituencies more or less limited, to support certain principles or political systems with clearly indicated names, and personified in tried and well known leaders. That Assembly was created by universal suffrage, its principles all to be sought after, and its leaders but dimly indicated. Principles, laws, leadership,

systems, influences were to be determined by *struggle*. The ground was cleared of all opposing prejudices. The race was open to all. There was no established pre-eminence to frown down, sneer down, censure down, or smile down, any sort of disputant, be he whom he might; no doctrine could startle, no language seem strange. The world expected some new unknown prophet—some one capable of reading the mystery supposed to be hidden in the great popular convulsion which had taken place. There was a religious awe over that Assembly, for it was deeply impressed on the minds of many, if not of all, that Providence had not permitted so astounding a change, one threatening to be so boundless in its effects, unless for the bringing of some wonderful purpose to light, by unfamiliar instruments. The order of established parliaments was reversed, the difficulties were in the way of reputation and eminence. All the facilities were for the unknown.

The building in which the nine hundred representatives met, was provisional. It was run up for the occasion, slight and pretentious—a sort of well-ordered scaffolding—to facilitate the elaboration of the Constitution, and then to be thrown down. There are strange coincidences in localities. That Tennis Court at Versailles, into which the States-General, when the doors of their place of meeting

were shut against them, rushed and joined in the immortal oath of the *jeu de paume*, was not inappropriate. The naked and harsh simplicity of such a place was not unsuited to men sternly marching to equality of condition. The game of rude rivalry so often played there, had no unfitting associations. There must have been some harmony between the place and the actors, to have so strongly fired the genius of the artist, and to have fascinated the eyes of all who had ever seen the work, original or engraved. It was in keeping with the character of a people who reverence law, that the first battle about ship money should have been in the Court of Exchequer. The Gracchi and Tell had scenes associated with their first endeavours. Even in modern maiden parliamentary meetings, be it by accident or design, some place consecrated by the occasion will be visited in time to come; but the great, or *monstre* temporary shed, in which the National Assembly of France first met, with its paste-board figures without, and its paste-board presidential canopy within, its endless tri-coloured flags in *faisceaux*, and its scenic decorations, partaking partly of the Circus and partly of the *Bal Morel*, will disappear like a mimic stage scene, carrying with it no unapt commentary on the no less fragile performance beneath its roof.

Let this passing reflexion on ephemeral architec-

ture be forgiven—for those who were not present on that day, can hardly estimate the feverish state of observation to which the minds of beholders present were raised. People looked at every one and every thing with a strange inexplicable curiosity. Those who had read and heard of that mightiest event in all history, the first French Revolution, and had speculated often, wondering many a time, how those who then lived had thought and felt, and how they bore the emotions which each hour awakened, and how some must have grown callous, some careless, and others mad—such persons found to their amazement that, may be, they too were destined to pass through the fiery trial of similar experience!

But the Assembly has met. How is it to be classified? What guide has the eye through that mass of nine hundred legislators? The only thing certain is, that all have accepted the Republic.

Although the actors were present, the drama did not properly begin until the members of the Provisional Government appeared. The shout of *Vive la République!* burst from the Assembly as they entered. It was loud; it was unanimous, and it was repeated; yet it may be doubted if it was heartfelt. To my ear it did not sound so. I shall never forget that cry—the first audible voice of that universal-suffrage-el[illegible] it

well, and my mind criticized, and, as it were, handled that sound, as if it were a material substance; but there was a something in the tone that the sure, yet impalpable test of sympathy, pronounced to be factitious. The majority who uttered that cry, did so under the fierce suspicious surveillance, not only of fellow members, but of lynx eyes in the gallery. There are vehement shouts that are the act of the will, determined by calculation and reflection, and self-imposed; but they do not awaken a response, like the deep heart-felt music of a holy sentiment through unmistakeable sincerity of voice.

Run the eye rapidly along these benches. There is the comely face of De la Rochejacquelin, resting on an unsullied expanse of snow-white neck-cloth and waistcoat, as if he had come to a royal sitting in the time of Charles X. M. Berryer was there, the brilliant leader of the legitimist party as it had been constituted in the Chamber of Deputies. Odilon Barrot, whose last public effort was in favour of the Regency, stood near to Dupin, the confidential law adviser of Louis-Philippe. Duvergier de Hauranne, Malleville, Remusat, Faucher, and many friends of M. Thiers stood there, brooding over the organized ostracism of which their brilliant leader had been made the victim, and *they* cried *Vive la République!*

M. Dufaure, who had refused to assist at a Reform banquet; Count Montalembert, the vigorous cham-

pion of the Swiss Jesuits; the Abbé Lacordaire, in his white Dominican robes; the Bishop of Orleans, the sober Abbé Fayet, from Brittany, the land of Vendeans and Chouans;* the Protestant pastor Coquerel —all joined in the cry. Is it to be wondered at, that to the watchful ear it was the harmony of science, not of soul; the accent of resignation, not of joy. And it was repeated again and again on the challenge of those who wished to be satisfied, that they heard a true sound, and the challenge was unblenchingly answered, by priests, lawyers, statesmen, thrown so incongruously together by an inexplicable *coup-de-main*.

The members of the Provisional Government naturally attracted the eyes of all who were present. The aged Dupont de l'Eure, bending under the weight of four-score years, leant on the arm of the boyish-looking little Louis Blanc. The burly Ledru Rollin held the arm of a mean-looking person, who was Flocon. The noble old philosopher, Arago, contrasted with the somewhat pert, theatrical looking Marrast; and the elegant imaginative-faced Lamartine, made the little ugly Crémieux look more ugly, and the heavy Pagnerre more heavy. Garnier Pagès, to whose common, yet sickly features, his locks curling to his shoulders,

* Since the ab[illegible] a victim to cholera.

gave an air of coxcombry that sat ill on the Finance Minister of a country in a revolution, contrasted with the grave and truly elegant demeanour of the avocat, Marie. Carnot, the son of the Conventionalist, called the organizer of victory, exhibited his pale, ascetic features by the side of the dogged and sinister looking Albert, the workman.

Thus, as far as appearances went, the Provisional Government resembled any similar number of men, showing, as it did, the average mixture of well and ill-favoured countenances. But where was the pilot, who was to weather the storm? In that group there was poetry, science, heroism, with violence, ambition, and low vices; there was noble self-deception and reckless illusion; there was angel and devil, good and evil; lofty aspirations and deep designs; there was the incarnation of all the sentiments, passions, aspirations, and vices of human society, but with a solemn vow to make the better triumph; there was wanting in each and all, political experience and political knowledge, nay there was a contempt for both, as for a broken galley-chain, that had only served to bind mankind to systems from which he was to break for ever, and launch into the unknown—believing his excited hopes to be heavenly inspirations.

The following address was read from the tribune

in a weak voice by the aged Dupont de l'Eure. "Citizens! representatives of the people! the Provisional Government of the Republic comes to incline itself before the nation, and to render conspicuous homage to the supreme power with which you are invested. Elect of the people! welcome to the great capitol where your presence excites a sentiment of happiness and hope that will not be disappointed. Depositaries of the National Sovereignty, you are about to found new institutions upon the wide basis of the democracy, and to give to France the only Constitution that is suitable to her—that of the Republic. But after having proclaimed the grand political law, which is henceforth to definitively constitute the country, you will endeavour to employ the efficacious action of the Government, as far as possible, in the relations that the necessity of labour establishes amongst all citizens, and which ought to have for base, the holy laws of Justice and Fraternity. In fine, the moment has arrived for the Provisional Government to place in your hands the unlimited power with which it was invested by the Revolution. For us, the dictatorship was only treated as a moral power in the midst of the difficult circumstances we have traversed. Faithful to our origin and our personal convictions, we have all been called to proclaim the rising Republic of February. To-day we inaugurate the labours of

the Assembly, with the cry that always rallies us together, *Vive la République !*"

At the close, the shouts of *Vive la République !* were repeated. M. Crémieux, the Minister of Justice, invited the members to enter the Bureaux, to have their elections validated, and the first scene of the great drama closed.

The verification of the elections was a simple and rapid process, limited merely to proof of identity and citizenship; and it was well that it was so, for had a handle for litigation been offered, through complex conditions, there can be no doubt that it would have been seized hold of by the old Republican party, who had already manifested their disappointment at the character of the returns. So completely had the Revolution been the work of a party in the capital, and so little did the departments sympathise with it, that it was deemed necessary by the Minister of the Interior to send Commissioners through the provinces, to make themselves acquainted with the state of feeling, to preach up Republicanism, and to get themselves returned. As these Commissioners were indicated for the most part by the Clubs, they were animated with the violent spirit of these assemblages, and their rude bearing and subversive doctrines, excited angry resistance and passionate resentment. The Commissioners were armed with unlimited power, which

they exercised in the full sense of the word, displacing local authorities, overruling local councils, giving forced currency to the notes of local banks, and, in fact, ruling with dictatorial power. Their march into the departments had been heralded by a circular, which immediately acquired celebrity from the distinction that it drew between *Républicains de la veille* and *Républicains du lendemain*, to the disadvantage of the latter.

Now, as the mass of the inhabitants of every portion of France ranged under the latter category, not only was exclusion pronounced against the majority, but as there is in every neighbourhood some busy, idle, turbulent, and needy agitator, the people saw themselves threatened with that unendurable evil, their prostration at the feet of an obnoxious member; and the consequence was distrust of the new Government, and resistance to its emissaries. In several places there were collisions, generally excited by the partizans of the Government Commissioner; but at Rouen there was a fierce contest between the military and National Guards on the one side, and the workmen on the other. The latter threw up barricades, that had to be taken by cannon.

Generally speaking, it must be confessed, the voting went on with a degree of order that, considering the circumstances under which a whole

people were called upon to exercise such a privilege as that of universal suffrage, was truly admirable; and proved, indeed, that the Revolution ought not to have been challenged on a mere question of a moderate extension of the franchise. The returns, too, instead of marking a revolutionary disposition, were such as might have been expected under the monarchy itself, being composed of mayors, manufacturers, farmers, officers on half-pay, the judges, law officers, doctors, or notaries of the locality: in a word, the notabilities of the place, or names already celebrated in the eyes of the public at large. Of course the Government Commissioners were very many of them returned, but it was evident that the *Républicains de la veille* would form a small minority in the National Assembly.

Although the Revolutionists had relied chiefly on the sympathies of the working classes, yet very few operatives were returned, and the Assembly presented a fair image of French society as at present constituted, which is only another way of saying that it was by its very nature Conservative. There was indeed a difference, amounting to a contrast, between the National Assembly of 1789 and that of 1848. The first came charged with the elements of class struggles: the latter had derived, as the result of those struggles an equality of condition and partition of agricultural property,

so that division of the soil had been pushed to such a point, as to interfere with the full development of its capabilities. The latter being in this position, had nothing to gain, if not everything to lose, by the social theories that had made cities dens of idleness and schools of civil war, and so they came to maintain, and not to overthrow.

Although it may look like a paradox to assert that it was the Conservative disposition of the country that caused the Republic to be so readily accepted, yet the fact is so. There had been so many changes of Government in France within sixty years, that peculiar *prestige* for any had long ceased. It did not follow in the minds of people, familiar alike with Republic, Directory, Consulate, Emperor, Restoration, Legitimacy, and Legitimacy set aside in 1830, that a relapse into one or other of the same phases should inevitably lead to ruin. The Republic had, like all new governments, announced that nothing would be changed—that the Revolution was a reaction against corruption, that was leading to financial ruin—that there would be fewer expenses, more economy, less taxation, and that, in fact, there was only in a monarch's overthrow a Frenchman *de moins*, as Louis XVIII. had called himself a Frenchman *de plus*. Such was, in fact, the first language used by the Provisional Government; for although very soon

indeed the socialist element broke out, yet there had been an interval which, short as it was, between the sudden declaration of the Republic and the Communism of Louis Blanc, was yet sufficient to enable the assent of the provinces to be obtained, on a belief in the truth of the moderate sentiments propounded, in the first instance, by the Provisional Government.

From this general view of the subject, it will be seen that at the very moment the National Assembly met, there was a general and common feeling of distrust. There was a still smouldering conspiracy at work on the part of the Socialist faction in conjunction with the Clubs. That conspiracy had already failed in two instances: on the 17th of March, when the workmen marched to the Hôtel-de-Ville, and mistaking the views of their leaders, shouted for the Provisional Government, which their demonstration was, as they thought, meant to support—although their leaders contemplated its subversion, and would have overthrown it, had the chief conspirator not lost heart: and again, on the 16th of April, when a plan for destroying the same Government was defeated by the prompt and energetic conduct of General Changarnier, who called out the National Guard.

In ten days from the meeting of the National

Assembly, the same conspiracy was to be directed against the Assembly itself. But we are anticipating. Was there not, let it now be asked, sufficient ground for trusting the evidence of the senses, that that cry of *Vive la République!* which met the Provisional Government on its entry, was on the one side a challenge, on the other a constrained and resigned effort to disarm hostility and suspicion, and *not* the blended harmony of joyous and happy souls, identified in a common sympathy.

The first inauguratory scene of the great drama of the National Assembly was, as has already been told, of short duration, nor was it particularly impressive. But there was a double plot in the piece, which was not visible to the public eye. As the representatives of the people passed from the great stage, they encountered on the way to their respective *bureaux*, persons whose manner and costume showed that they too had their parts assigned, and were already performing them. Men, with long beards, pointed hats, and pieces of red cloth on their arms, met the representatives, who, by the way, wore—such of them, at least, as chose to attend to a fantastical decree of the Provisional Government on the subject—pieces of red ribbon, with gold tinsel thereon, at their button-hole; and the men of decorated arms gazed broadly on the

men of decorated and undecorated coats, rudely examined their air, their features and general appearance, accompanied them to their *bureaux*, and even essayed to violate the sanctuary of the Committee-room.

Members complained and inquired, when they learned to their astonishment and indignation, that a deputation from the Clubs had waited on the Minister of the Interior, that they demanded that a portion of the public gallery should be assigned to Club delegates, charged with a commission to watch the proceedings of the Assembly; and that for the more easy communication with the Clubs, arrogating to themselves, as they did, the true expression of public opinion, two *bureaux* should be assigned to the delegation, with pen, ink, paper, and all appliances and means to boot; and to this imperious demand the Minister of the Interior had courteously yielded.

Thus, the representatives of the people, elected by universal suffrage, found the elements prepared for renewing the worst scenes of the first Convention. The galleries, or *tribunes*, as they are called, were to be brought to bear on the deliberations of the Assembly. The representatives were to meet under the muzzles of the *sans-culotte* artillery. The leaders of the Clubs, and the leaders of the *Mountain*, were to have their understood

signals and mystic organization. While orations were uttering within, the aides-de-camp of Demagogueism would be scouring through the streets, and the Assembly would find itself in the unrelaxing gripe of the mob.

A fact, coming hard and strong upon the senses, tells more than the best authenticated communications. It had been whispered, that Monsieur *un tel* had said, in one place, that suspected Moderates, or doubtful Republicans, would, on crossing the bridge that leads to the Chamber, be thrown into the Seine; that officers, before they had been elected to command companies of National Guards, had had to subscribe to a declaration, that in case of a division of opinion between the people and the Assembly, they would act with the former; that the Guard Mobile, in clubs, had uttered their *credo*, as to the circumstances in which revolt would become the most sacred of duties. All this had been said in one shape or another, and had been listened to listlessly, or proudly, or contemptuously, according to the temperament; but when the eye has to pierce into physiognomy, and read more than language can convey; when the Club-man stands there, the representative of mysterious power, and shows by his demeanour that resolves have been made that shall be carried into execution, that there exists an illegitimate legislative and executive—rival, if not

master, of the constituted authority itself—it is not permitted to the hardiest man to treat such audacity with indifference. The consequence was, that when the Assembly proceeded to regulate its internal form, a resolution was taken not to allow any interruption from the gallery, and, on a remonstrance from the members, the Clubs were deprived of their *ex-officio* rights within the walls.

As the several elections became verified, the Chamber filled, and on the prompting of some or other enthusiastic Republican, the shout of *Vive la République!* would be raised. This was not, however, sufficient for the most ardent. The Commander-in-Chief of the National Guards, General Courtais, a good-looking elderly man, with an agreeable expression of face, in whose naturally handsome features there was a mixture of audacity and levity, the latter amounting to giddiness, ascended the tribune; and although, as he said, they had proclaimed the Republic seventeen times that day, yet the people desired that they should go outside, that all might blend their voices together. What a strange part this for the Commander of the National Guards, charged with the protection of the Assembly itself, to intimate to that body a message from the sovereign people, with an implied penalty for disobedience! But there was no time for reflection at such a moment. The

people had for more than two months been too much accustomed to be petted and humoured to make it safe to refuse such a proposal; so the Assembly proceeded *en masse* to the peristyle of the old Chamber of Deputies, and the scene that occurred was, in all external respects, of the most animated, beautiful, and—had it been sustained by moral grandeur—would have been of the most sublime kind.

The scene from the bridge of the Chamber of Deputies is at all times imposing; but at sunset, when the weather is fine, indescribably beautiful. "'Tis beautiful exceedingly!" Fancy a gorgeous sun immediately over, and enveloping that superb monument, the Arc de Triomphe de l'Etoile, sending its rays upon the sparkling fountains of the Place de la Concorde, and converting the red Egyptian column, the Luxor, into a pillar of dull flame; the chaste architecture of the Madeleine becomes sweet silver; the windows of the Tuileries glitter like the robes of a Queen Sheba; and then, far down on the river, in sober contrast with modern architectural beauties, the old Paris, behind its rampart, the Pont-Neuf, looking still a city of the Middle Ages, with the holy fane of St. Louis tempering the stiff pike-like turrets of the Conciergerie, and behind all, the two saint-like towers of Notre Dame,—sentinels of religion and of time, receiving

on their brows, softly and chastely, the retiring light, with many gems from old casements darting through the evening mist; fancy all this, and then people the foreground, the steps of the Chamber, the bridge, the quays, the Place de la Concorde, with National Guards, Deputies, and a population suddenly surprised by a spectacle altogether created by a combination of novel and accidental circumstances, with bands of music, leaving no sense ungratified, and you will understand that the universal shout of *Vive la République!* was then, at all events, as heartfelt as it was universal.

And so closed the first meeting of the National Assembly.

CHAPTER II.

FIRST OPERATIONS — M. BUCHEZ — NEWSPAPER INFLUENCE—THE MEN OF THE 'NATIONAL,' AND THE MEN OF THE 'REFORME.'

THE Assembly met, for the second time, on Friday the 5th of May, in order to appoint, by ballot, their various officers, such as president, vice-presidents, secretaries, and questors. The operation was extremely tedious, owing to the clumsy manner in which the votes had to be collected; a system subsequently abandoned for a more expert mode, but worthy of notice in this instance, because it served to show, in a striking manner, the materials of which the Assembly was composed. The balloting urns were placed on the tribune, and as it became necessary for each member to ascend and drop his vote into the urn, it will be seen that the time necessary for eight or nine hundred members to ascend and descend would be considerable. The mob-like manner in which so many had to

crowd to the foot of the tribune, was not favourable to quiet deportment, and so, on the very first day, there was a dispute provoked by the rude conduct of Barbès, of whom we shall have more to say hereafter, in which the exchange of names "Aristocrats" and "Factieux" were heard.

There was, as we have had to notice, dissatisfaction, on the part of the Revolutionists, at the character of the returns; and although time had not been afforded for parties to group together, or for friends to recognize one another, yet the first nomination of officers would, it was fairly calculated, help to throw some light on the numerical strength of parties. Hence it was, that when the greater part of the day had been consumed in the election of president, which resulted in the defeat of the ultra party, the latter would not listen to an adjournment for the succeeding election, thus occasioning the ferment in which the hard names were exchanged, such as we have just noticed. The Revolutionists gained their point, for the proceedings were carried far into the evening, a half hour having been allowed to intervene for refreshments. The first scrutiny for President showed that 727 had voted. M. Buchez obtained 382; M. Trelat, 234; and M. Recurt, 91; M. Buchez was thus declared first monthly President of the Assembly.

The two defeated members had each figured as political conspirators under the late reign, yet their titles were set aside for those of a Christian Socialist, of wavering opinions. M. Buchez was, moreover, a man of the *National*, favourably known by a history of the debates of the Convention, which he had compiled with M. Bastide, one of the editors of that now-governing paper; and here let us make some observations with respect to newspaper influence, which, were we to omit, one of the main-springs of these present movements would be lost sight of altogether. The Revolution of February had hardly been accomplished, when a controversy arose upon the question, whether it was the men of the *National*, or the men of the *Réforme*, who made that revolution. We are not to infer that it was the writing contained in either or both of those journals that had produced such an effect. It is generally supposed in England, that because the writer of newspaper articles in France is an avowed, recognized, responsible person, his journal is therefore marked with a stamp of personality, which causes the paper to be regarded as the expression of an individual, rather than the manifesto of a party. Yet the truth is, that however well known the writer may be, he merges into the particular political sect of which the paper is, as it were, the pulpit. For years the *National* had been the [illegible] the

Republican party, acting on the principles of their famous leaders, Armand Carrel and Godefroy Cavaignac, both of whom died young. After their death, the party was without a leader, properly speaking; and although the paper continued to be conducted with remarkable talent, its circulation was extremely low, and its writers exercised no great influence upon the people.

Sometime after M. Ledru Rollin had started in public life, a division arose in the republican party: the *National* was too tame for so fiery a tribune, and the *Réforme* was founded by that gentleman, in conjunction with M. Flocon. On the famous night of the 23rd of February, the bureaux of the *National* and of the *Réforme* were the scenes of busy intrigue and agitated councils. Whether the fiat went forth from the *National* or from the *Réforme*, is still a question. The former journal asserts, that on the morning of the fatal day, the watchwords "*A bas les Bourbons!*" "*Vive la République!*" were printed on slips in the office, and circulated; so far compromising the paper, that had the Republic not been declared, the crime of high treason hung over the heads of all concerned. The *Réforme* lays claim to rougher and deeper work; in fact, to having raised the barricades and incited the attacks.

The men of the *National* were the first to enjoy

the fruits of the revolution which the men of the *Réforme* claim to have made. While Ledru Rollin, and Flocon, and Caussidière, stumbled in the race, General Cavaignac, the brother of Godefroy, who adhered to the *National* party, rose to the highest office. Marrast, the chief writer, became successively Mayor of Paris and President of the Assembly, and, what was perhaps a more gratifying honour, President of the Committee of the Constitution, and author of the great Charter of the Republic, to draw up which Cormenin and Lamennais had aspired in vain. Bastide, another writer, became Minister for Foreign Affairs; Duclerc, a contributor, Minister of Finance. In fact, the highest and most honourable situations, at home and abroad, seats in the Cabinet, Prefectures, and embassies, devolved on the happy clique who wrote in the *National*. The dislike expressed by the *Réforme* is not the trading rivalry of shop with shop, but clique against clique. Although every paper has the stamp of personality upon it, yet the writer, unless he be a man of very great eminence, is not so much considered as the party leader whose organ the paper professes to be. The *Siècle* is not M. Chambole's, but Odilon Barrot. The *Constitutionnel* is not Véron or Merruan, but Thiers; although neither Barrot nor Thiers wrote except on rare occasions in these organs of their parties. *Le Bien*

Public is not M. Pelletan, but Lamartine; and the *Réforme* is Ledru-Rollin.

Thus it happened under the monarchy, that, as there could not be political associations or clubs, the journal became the central point of parties and factions—the voice, the rendezvous, the government of the political sect. The journal was not a mere mercantile speculation, seeking to attract customers, and its writers obscure unknown men, drudging in the dark, or uttering mysterious oracles under the plural mask, but an active power, aspiring to rule and government. On this account the personality of the paper is, in France, as indispensable as is the personality of a political association in England. Men must know their leaders when they can call meetings and speak; those leaders speak and have little need of personal displays in the press. As speeches fill the columns of papers, so leading articles diminish in importance. It was often remarked, that even Paris journals lost their influence when the Chambers met. A consideration of these circumstances may help to explain the abiding connexion that has so long existed between French statesmen and the press. The journal being the only means through which a politician can make himself heard, every distinguished statesman begins his career by making himself heard through that channel without disguise, and never after-

wards separates himself from it, but, like a lecturer at the Sorbonne, transplanted to the Cabinet, continues to speak through a *suppliant*, while his name figures on the sessional programme.

M. Buchez, the happy colleague of M. Bastide, became the first President of the Assembly. His appearance was bluff and homely, but his natural indecision of conduct rendered him less able to grapple with the difficulties of keeping so democratic a body in order than he had perhaps conceived, or than his broad, plain physiognomy would have seemed to indicate. The unimaginable turbulence of the early meetings of the Assembly used to bewilder him, and the nervous and unpremeditated way in which he would ring the large hand-bell with which he was furnished, (and it was his only resource,) used to render confusion more confounded. One day the tongue of the bell gave way in his efforts to restore order; and that incident did more towards the desired effect, by creating a laugh, than his most elaborate efforts would have effected. As the Revolution had repeatedly been pronounced social rather than political, the nomination of M. Buchez, himself a sort of mystic Socialist, was calculated to give a certain degree of satisfaction to those who looked for social modifications in society; while his well-known studious, religious, and humane character, took away the alarm with

which those who viewed all classes of Socialists with fear and dread, might have regarded so important a nomination.

The Vice-Presidents, Secretaries, and Quæsteurs, were chiefly taken from the more moderate Republican section, which, it is now unnecessary to repeat, means here the party represented by the *National*.

CHAPTER III.

THE MEMBERS OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT—THEIR REPORTS—LAMARTINE—PORTRAIT OF CREMIEUX—OF LOUIS BLANC—OF CARNOT.

On Saturday the 6th of May, after a considerable number of elections had been verified, the members of the Provisional Government proceeded each to render an account of his stewardship. Owing to the extreme age of M. Dupont de l'Eure, the President of the Council, M. de Lamartine undertook to read what purported to be the general report of the head of the Government. The style, however, betrayed the real author. Having described the Revolution as the act of the people, the orator proceeded to state, that their first idea was to restore order in Paris; in which work, that would have been difficult or meritorious in any other country, they had been aided by that magnanimous people, who, with the one hand having overturned Royalty, raised with

the other the wounded and vanquished, protected the life and property of the inhabitants, and preserved the public monuments. Posterity, he said, which did not flatter, would not be able to find expression equal to the dignity of the people of Paris. It was the people who had inspired the first decree of the Provisional Government—the abolition of capital punishment for political offences.

"France and Europe comprehended that God revealed his inspirations in the crowd, and that a Revolution, inaugurated by greatness of soul, would be pure as an idea, magnanimous as a sentiment, holy as a virtue."

And this was said, notwithstanding that the Palais Royal had been sacked, its treasures of art destroyed; that the post of municipal guards of the Chateau d'Eau, opposite the Palais Royal, had been burned, and the sixty-five municipal guards roasted and suffocated; that the Palace of Neuilly had been sacked and burned to the ground, and a mass of incendiaries, who had polluted the bedrooms of the Queen and Princesses, died, surfeited, in the cellars; that the chateau of M. de Rothschild at Suresne, worth 50,000*l.*, had been wantonly destroyed; and that attempts had been made to set the Tuileries on fire.

"We have founded," said the orator, "the Republic; a form of Government declared to be impos-

sible in France, on any other conditions than those of war abroad, civil war, anarchy, the prisons and the scaffold. We have exhibited the Republic happily compatible with European peace, with national peace, with voluntary order, with individual liberty, with the gentleness and serenity of manners of a nation, in whose eyes hatred is a punishment, and harmony a natural instinct."

This was said nine days only before the invasion of the Chamber, followed by the insurrection of June. Want of foresight may be pardonable; but what follows?

"We have passed forty-five days without any other executive force than that of moral authority, entirely disarmed, but condescendingly recognized by the nation, and the people allowed itself to be governed by words, by our counsels, by its own generous inspiration."

And this was gravely uttered, notwithstanding the two conspiracies of the 17th of March and the 16th of April; the first of which had failed through misconception, and the second, baffled by the promptitude and energy of General Changarnier. Such statements read now most strangely, and show the magnitude of the delusion under which all laboured at the moment when they were not only credited, but received with acclamation.

The moment is not opportune for judging M. de

Lamartine, yet we are not far from the fitting time; for revolutions either stamp their men with the seal of immortal glory, or reject them rapidly: in the moments of a nation's crisis much time is not allowed for weighing and balancing doubtful merit.

M. Ledru-Rollin succeeded M. de Lamartine, and for the present we shall confine ourselves to a brief review of the topics he addressed to his auditory. Having declared that he had always been a Republican, he proceeded at once to justify his having sent commissioners, armed with unlimited powers, into the departments, for the purpose of innoculating the country with Republican ideas. This measure had fearfully damaged the Minister of the Interior, and he felt the necessity of explaining it as one of conciliation, and not as it had been regarded—a reminiscence of the Convention. He then took credit for his laborious administration, and appealed to his successful reconstruction of the national guards and the police, the creation of the *garde mobile*, and the organization of universal suffrage, as affording the best replies to what he called the infamous calumnies of which he had been the object. While he proclaimed his Republican principles, he yet avowed himself a lover of order, and took credit for having called out the national guard on the 16th of April. In conclusion, he touched on the delicate ground of Socialism,

saying that the Revolution should not be considered a barren conquest of political forms. These forms were but an instrument for realizing, in the social order, the dogma of equality and fraternity.

The report of M. Ledru-Rollin, of which the foregoing is the substance, was read by that gentleman with excessive vehemence, and was received with unsympathizing coldness.

The portly and rather prematurely corpulent M. Ledru-Rollin, who had succeeded the slim, graceful, and ideal form of Lamartine, was followed by the unprepossessing Crémieux, (of Jewish birth,) Minister of Justice, the very expression of an *avocat*, whose factitious warmth could rise with the amount of his fees, and on whose face and bearing, the professional necessity of adulation to courts and juries had stamped an artificial *bonhommie*, which offspring of cunning, as it were, disarmed any disposition to hostility. The habit of seeking to exercise influence by look and voice, does become influence eventually. With the easy assurance of one habituated to extemporaneous effusion, he quickly abandoned his written report, and in an unembarrassed, colloquial fashion, described the good deeds of his ministry. Now, these good deeds might be resolved into two that were very bad. He audaciously violated the principle of the permanency of judges, justly regarded, under well-regulated go-

vernment, as the best security for their independence; and he excited a ferment throughout the length and breadth of the land by an intimation of his intention to facilitate divorce. Apologizing for the first and main branch of his administration regarding the magistracy, he dwelt upon the corruption of the monarchy, which had, he alleged, inseparably bound up politics with the administration of justice. Without stopping to inquire into the truth of his assertions, it must yet be said, that, of all the audacious usurpations of the Provisional Government, anticipatory of rights belonging to the National Assembly, this violation of the magistracy was one of the most unjustifiable; but for a moment it was allowed, like all the rest, to pass. It is right to notice, that M. Crémieux's exordium, like M. Ledru-Rollin's péroration, contained a Socialist flourish, for he described the first duty of the Republic to be the providing of the instruments of labour for all members of the community; another mode of expressing *le droit du travail*, the consequences involved in which were in all probability but little suspected by the *avocat* at the time, and only uttered because the Revolution had, at the very moment of its achievement, taken a Socialist form. It behoved the Minister of Justice to make profession of the new faith; and he did so, like many a hasty convert

at the sword's point, without understanding very clearly what he was about.

The true hero of this day's scene, M. Louis Blanc, ascended the tribune next. The true hero, because the truly dangerous man. Figure to yourself a very small person—the very smallest you had ever seen above the species of the dwarf. With his back turned to you, you would be inclined to suppose that the glossy black hair and drooping shoulders belonged to a girl in male disguise; the face turned round, you were struck by the prominent, clear, dark eyes, the olive complexion, and the disappearance of effeminacy in the strong jaw and chin. The general expression was rather melancholy. Had you heard of him only as the author of the "Histoire des Dix Ans," a book so polished and so piquant, of such lively narration, such sparkling antithesis, such finished portraiture, you would rather have believed that you had a hero of the *salons*, than the president of the delegates of workmen—the evil genius of the Revolution. The work which formed Louis Blanc's title to a seat at the table of the Provisional Government was probably, in the minds of Lamartine and Marrast, the elegant satire that had done so much to undermine and discredit Louis-Philippe and his family; but the work which gave him credit in the eyes of the

working classes, and on which he himself took his stand, was a *brochure*, unknown or forgotten by the republic of letters, on the organization of labour.

It has been said that Louis Blanc possesses the sensuality and sensibility of the southern races, with a deep-seated pride that induces him rather to shrink from the society of gross men; that he is touched with misanthropy, and little respects the masses whose champion he became. Such inconsistencies find their explanation in marked sensibility and deep-seated ambition. It is not the philosophical temperament; and no man can be less a philosopher than the ardent apostle of a new society. The "Organisation du travail" is a true picture of the author's mind. His analysis of the composition of society, his painful statistics of beggary, prostitution, ill-regulated labour, of lives closed in hospitals—all this is in the most painfully fascinating style of narration; the cry that rises from his pierced soul against society thrills through the reader;—but there stops the part of the inquirer.

When he comes to reconstruct that which he has knocked down, when he essays to remould the materials that lie molten in the furnace of his fiery indignation, the poverty of his invention becomes apparent; he stops short, incapable of

advancing into the pure regions of philosophic thought. He may invoke justice, but cannot apply it. Tracing all the evils of society to one cause, *only* one cause, he proposes to eradicate them, although society should come tumbling down, by the removal of an essential part of its foundation. That one cause is competition, or *concurrence.* Competitors can never be fairly matched in society, because of the advantages inherently appertaining to capital: that is to say, the man who brings much money to the working of a factory or trade, must crush the rival who brings but little. A great quantity of money in the hands of a man, or company of men, secures for that man or company an actual monopoly. The labouring man, who has no money or capital, is placed by his necessities at the mercy of those who have; so that slavery, although banished from modern society, exists in fact under a disguised form. According to this view, society is a system of strife and contest, in which the strong devour the weak, through a horrible competition, which divides the whole into two classes; the new aristocracy of finance, called *bourgeoisie,* and the *proletaires,* whom they hold in serfage.

As competition could not exist without capital, M. Louis Blanc would, if he could not destroy capital, at least neutralize its effect by making it the

duty of the State to provide the working classes with the instruments of labour; in other words, by making the State find capital through a popular system of credit. As, for example, instead of a factory being under the direction of a moneyed employer, it should be worked by the men, no longer the *employés* of another, but on their own personal account, the State supplying the means. But this is not all, for inasmuch as *concurrence* or competition would still exist, the State should interfere once more so to regulate prices, as that no one social establishment should outsell another, or be outsold by rival capitalists. In aid of the general plan, he would oblige the working people to live together, mess together, amuse themselves together, have schools, infirmaries, and all necessary institutions attached to their several factories, on a perfect footing of equality and fraternity, and contrive exchanges between one sort of manufactured articles and another, so as to make the social machine, in a great degree, work itself.

Taking for granted that he had thus destroyed competition on the whole, the discovery is made that competition may yet exist individually; for it would so happen, that in these new monasteries one man would be stronger than another, or be brighter or more ingenious; would it be just that the share falling to the skilful or industrious should

not be more than that claimed by the dull or the lazy? To this objection the author boldly answers, by affirming perfect equality in wages, laying it down as an axiom, held generally by Communists, that each should be paid according to his wants, and not according to the quantity of his production. But, it was asked, how could you force a man of strength and industry to put forth his powers, and weary himself with toil, when he would be deprived of the stimulus of reward, and see the indifferent as well remunerated as himself? This question was pressed hard upon M. Blanc at one of the meetings of Delegates at the Luxembourg, and his answer betrayed a simplicity becoming a recluse, rather than a practical philosopher. He would, he said, have conspicuously inscribed on a placard that the "idler is a robber," *le paresseux est un voleur*. The whole plan, therefore, rested on two pillars—the State taking the place of the capitalist, and the most perfect individual honour of self-denial; or upon human nature, different from what human nature has ever been known to be—upon human nature deprived of the natural stimulus to exercise its powers by the invention of reward. As the object is here to make an expository statement rather than an argument, the objections to this scheme are not fully noticed. They are, however, sufficiently apparent.

When M. Louis Blanc made his appearance at the tribune of the National Assembly, it was not so much the author that fixed attention as the man of active, effective, pernicious influence. It was generally believed that he had, by his doctrines, at the Luxembourg, turned the heads of the working classes; and he was strongly suspected of having been implicated in the conspiracy of April. He was looked upon as a dangerous fanatic, prepared to carry out his views at all hazards. Had a serpent reared its crest at the tribune, it could have hardly excited more fear and aversion, than did that juvenile-looking man, with shining, well-brushed hair, and fashionable blue coat, glittering with bright buttons, and for whose accommodation a stool had to be introduced, to raise him to a level with his audience. Material circumstances influence even oratorical effects. French orators habitually employ much gesticulation; but as it would not be safe to gesticulate upon a stool, the little man was constrained to preserve throughout the same stiff attitude. His voice was loud and clear, but monotonous; so that the whole effect was that of a recitation of an exercise, learned by rote, and delivered by a youth at a public examination. Nor were encouraging friends wanting. A celebrated lady, of known Communist opinions, as remarkable for the brilliant beauty of her style,

as the corrupting laxity of her sentiments, sat conspicuously in the front of the gallery, wearing broad, red ribbons, as a sign of her sympathy with the République Rouge. There was something of a provoking character in the well-assumed fierceness of tone and aspect, with which the orator faced the Assembly. Referring to the proclamation of the Republic, he told them that the people had proclaimed it before them; and so far from seeking to win favour by deference or insinuation, he looked and spoke as if he held the force of the revolution in his small hand, and could, and would, let loose the destroying storm on the Assembly, should it not respond to popular expectation.

The contrast between M. Ledru-Rollin and Louis Blanc, so far as personal appearance was concerned, was striking enough. But the burly appearance of the former—his frowns and threats, failed to indicate strength of purpose, or overbearing will. Not so the latter. The slight person was one who could not be smiled at, for there was expressed subtlety, daring ambition, and unflinching determination. Of mingled French and Corsican blood, there stood before the Assembly a Communist-Bonaparte, ready to perpetrate another 18th Brumaire—to carry out the policy of a Robespierre.

The address of Louis Blanc was a reproach. He began by referring to the demand made by the

people on the Place de Grève, immediately after the Revolution of February, who, with the drapeau waving over their heads, on which was inscribed *Organisation du Travail,* demanded the creation of a *Ministère du Progrès*—that was to say, an administration devoted to the study of the Labour Question; or, in point of fact, an administration charged with the task of carrying into execution Louis Blanc's own plans for the organisation of labour, such as we have already sketched them from his book. But to return to the orator: he proceeded to say, that the Provisional Government, not feeling itself authorised to create a new administration—an act properly belonging to the National Assembly—decided upon appointing a Commission for the working classes, which should hold its sittings at the Luxembourg, under the direction of his noble friend, the workman, Albert, and himself. He then summed up the difficulties they had to encounter in presence of men whose hopes had been so violently excited, and which they had no means of meeting; but it became clear, through the hints he threw out, that the Assembly could not escape the promises that had been made to the working classes. Having glanced at the fraternal association of tailors that had been installed in the debtors' prison of the Rue de Clichy, and which was intended to be the practical commencement of the

system prescribed in his work on the "Organisation du Travail"—an experiment that, by the way, proved a melancholy failure—the orator announced that the inquiries made at the Luxembourg, had for result, that the whole scheme which would be communicated to the Assembly, embracing industry, commerce, agriculture, colonies, and taxation, would be found to rest on two grand bases: Association, and the tutelary intervention of the State. This statement was received with marked coldness. The conclusion did not startle by its novelty, for it was precisely that of the "Organisation du Travail," the contents of which had already been read and judged.

Citizen Carnot, Minister of Public Instruction, next rose. Carnot, the son of the member of the Committee of Public Safety, the 'Organiser of Victories,' as he was called by Napoleon, bore a great republican name. He was a cold, ascetic-looking man, of a fair, pale complexion, and somewhat bald. M. Carnot read his Report in a shy, unpretending manner. Although his appearance was not calculated to excite suspicion of violence of temperament, or of extravagance of mind, yet there was a strong feeling of prejudice against him, founded upon an electioneering circular that he had addressed to the heads of colleges, and other educational institutions, in which he broached the odd doctrine—coming

from such a Minister, and to such men—that education did not necessarily qualify a man to be a representative of the people. To make the inconsistency more complex, he recommended the poor, ill-requited provincial *Instituteur* to stand as candidates. But the political object at which the Minister aimed, or seemed to aim, would have been equally accomplished in either case; for illiterate men, who could not make speeches, and who would become the submissive tools of ministers, and schoolmasters looking for promotion, who could not think of thwarting the Minister of Public Instruction, would have equally served the purpose of the party who were ambitious of governing the Republic. As if for the purpose of removing the evil effect of the circular in question, the Minister began by professing respect for the Clergy, and declared that he felt "strongly convinced in his conscience, that belief in God is the very principle of all serious faith in the grandeur of human destiny." He then struck out a plan of reform, such as he conceived became necessary to put education in harmony with Republican Institutions; for he considered, that as the offices of the State should henceforward be thrown open to all classes of the people without reserve, so should all be instructed in a manner to fit them for public employments. Education should, according to the principles involved in this scheme,

assume a political form, and political instruction be made to predominate in academic teaching.

The Minister of Agriculture and Commerce next read his Report; but as M. Bethmont resigned very soon after, on account of ill-health, there is no necessity for noticing a gentleman, whose brief career has left no trace; the more especially as his Report opened no great question of speculation or practice. It was confined and technical.

With that Report, terminated the proceedings of the day.

CHAPTER IV.

GARNIER PAGES—ARAGO—MARIE, THE REAL AUTHOR OF THE NATIONAL ATELIERS—LAMARTINE—BERANGER—A PARLIAMENTARY HURRICANE—THE 'MOUNTAIN' AND BARBES—THE HISTORY OF THE CONSPIRATORS—THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT DECLARED TO HAVE MERITED WELL OF THEIR COUNTRY.

THE adjourned meeting of the National Assembly on Monday, the 8th of May, proved highly interesting and curious. It became the turn of M. Garnier Pagès, the Finance Minister of the Provisional Government, to tell what feats he had performed. This M. Garnier Pagès had been an *agent de change* or broker, who on the death of his brother, a republican member of some celebrity, was elected his successor to the vacant seat. He is a tall, thin, and somewhat sickly-looking man, with small yet clumsy features, a little pert, and yet a little prim, while his sleek hair falling in curls to the nape of

the neck, gives to the whole physiognomy a fantastic expression. He is what he looks, presumptuous and shallow, and yet not morose nor unkind. A man who would not cause individual ruin, but not a man to save a state. His address was very long, very elaborate, and cast into divisions or chapters, with appropriate headings in a business-like fashion.

He laboured to prove, that the systematic corruption of the monarchy was conducting the country to an abyss, from which it had been saved by the Republic. The preceding speakers had taken a more or less socialist view of the Revolution; but M. Garnier Pagès saw in it, merely a reaction against corruption. It was thus that he became the expression of the *République modérée et honnête.* He opposed successfully the scheme of M. Ledru-Rollin for a return to assignats, because he could not see any deeper change effected by the Republic, than a departure from corrupt practices. So little derangement did he contemplate, that he ventured to make a financial statement with the calm, satisfied air of a Chancellor of the Exchequer, in times the most untroubled; and showed that, at the end of the year 1848, a year to be marked apart in the great chronicle of the world's history, there would be a very respectable surplus of some eleven millions of francs in the national Treasury. No

one ventured to probe this statement, to ask questions, or to throw out doubts; and although it was not possible that such a statement could have been swallowed, yet it was allowed to pass, for the apparent reason, that any soothing mystification was welcome; and proof was soon afforded, by the votes that placed this gentleman in the Executive Commission, that optimism at such a moment was the best of parliamentary virtues.

After M. Garnier Pagès, there ascended the tribune a man in all respects his opposite, the venerable François Arago, who detailed what he had done as Minister of War and Minister of Marine, to place the forces of the country in a position to meet the eventualities that might arise out of the general state of perturbation into which Europe had been thrown. The account, so far as related to the army, was formidable enough; but that which was left out of consideration was, after all, the serious point,—viz., the heavy military burthen which the country had incurred rendered nugatory the fine flourishes in which the Finance Minister had just been indulging. A country thrown into such a state as France had been, with commerce arrested, trade stopped, enterprize paralyzed, and industry languishing, without credit abroad or confidence at home, might feel happy in regarding the aspect of her military strength; but on reflection must have

discovered that the test was ruinous. We have, however, more to do with the speaker than with the subject. François Arago is a fine, stalwart old man, tall, dark and sinewy; his head is magnificent, and when he is seated by other men, its vast size strikes with astonishment amounting to awe. Standing alone, this great development of head is not so remarkable, because it is symmetrical, for no object of fine symmetry ever strikes the eye as disproportioned; this noble dome is furnished with thin hair, once jetty black, and not yet grey; the large eye is bold and thoughtful; the features massive and well shaped, and altogether Arago looks a man of iron frame and great intellectual power.

His history is full of mistakes, as must ever be that of a man marked out so unmistakeably by Providence for one great object—and that object the interpretation of the mysteries of Nature's most sublime work,—who must needs turn aside to bend his knee to the pitiful idols of human passion or folly. Why should an Arago desert the Observatory for the Chamber? Why leave the telescope for the lorgnette, through which to read the mysteries of ministerial benches. Nature denied him the gift of speech. He who could plunge into the infinity of space, and take his pupils along with him, was forbidden the tribune. Scientific eloquence sank into dribbling political *bavardage*. The whole

of Arago's political life, had only served to make him a great prize for a pack of revolutionists, whom he soon learend to despise. Any one who doubted that his eyes had been opened, as by a great shock, needed only to look at his dejected aspect. What an inheritance had he not, we will not say sold, but perilled for a mess of potage? Only think of this sage being obliged to plead his grey hairs to Louis Blanc, and implore that the latter would not expose, as he was doing by his conduct at the Hôtel-de-Ville, his throat to the knife of the mob; and yet there was not a particle of cowardice in that energetic soul. When we hear of some bold act done at a critical moment by the Government, be sure that it was inspired by Arago. More than once has he taken a ruffian mob leader by the collar, and paralyzed his wicked intentions. At the Hôtel-de-Ville he announced his readiness to descend into the street, and do battle with the Red Republic. He was the first member of the Government to mount the barricades in June. When a young man he was made prisoner by Barbary corsairs, while engaged on a scientific expedition, a romantic adventure full of peril, which probably endeared many a forgotten romance to his memory, for before the age of Edgeworth and Scott, the Barbary corsair was the great resource of all romancers in difficulty. This event, mayhap, gave him that

mingled love of action and science, such as might seize a surgeon who had assisted at a campaign. It was not fortunate for his fame. Whenever Arago thought to aid a party move, he covered himself with as much unenviable wonder as did Newton, when he wrote commentaries on the book of Daniel. On the fortifications-of-Paris question, Arago not only gave to the cannons of the surrounding forts an impossible range, but he filled the trenches with water from impossible sources, and destroyed the advanced works of an enemy with showers of small rain; such freaks and more could be forgiven a man like Arago; and if his name served, in the first instance, to give lustre and power to a mob-made Provisional Government, his prompt disdain, and deep mournful condemnation served subsequently the cause of order by the influence of his great example—that order for which, he observed, that he could offer himself a martyr. May the close of his life be devoted to science, and be as glorious as untroubled!

M. Marie, the Minister of Public Works, came next. This gentleman it was who had organized the *Ateliers Nationaux*, which furnished the insurgent soldiers of June, and not Louis Blanc, as has been erroneously supposed. The national workshops were a necessity of the times, and not the commencement of a communist plan. The Revolu-

tion had, as an inévitable consequence, caused a temporary stoppage of works of all kinds. Commerce was struck with paralysis, trade had ceased, the mills stopped, and ordinary business came to a stand still. The work people were thrown out of employment in thousands, and as they must be fed, and it would be an indignity to offer them charity, it became necessary to find employment. As the State was not prepared to order watches from watchmakers, rings, and chains, and necklaces, and bracelets from jewellers, as it could in fact only set men to dig, all the work-people were furnished with spades, pick-axes and wheel-barrows. It would be cruel to task household servants, working jewellers, or those whose soft hands would bleed at such toil, and if persisted in be rendered unfitted for their former avocations; the inspector, therefore, winked at idleness; the example of tolerated idleness became infectious, the workmen passing their day in talking, joking, amusing themselves, and discussing licentious papers, found life so agreeable, that even when private employment offered, they would not take it. The very form of organization of these *Ateliers* was vicious. It was military. The men were assembled in brigades and companies under officers. They marched to work preceded by banners, and having passed the day in the manner described, they proved in the

evening how much their imaginations had been affected by the military regime, for they spent the long summer evening at ball practice, and when this pleasing occupation was over, the pensioned Sybarites would club together and return home in carriages. The head-quarters, or *état-major* of this army of *travailleurs* set the example of licentiousness; so that the city of Paris had to witness the dangerous spectacle of a surrounding army of idling people, pensioned by the State, learning ball practice and drill, with the certainty that there were active demagogues and agents of revolt amongst them, preparing for an invasion as perilous as that of the barbarians who destroyed Rome.

M. Marie was not blind to these dangers. Having drawn a picture of the sufferings of the working classes, and of the insufficiency of the Mairies to afford relief, he mentioned that the idea of employing all on some common work, gave rise to the National Ateliers. "I know," said he, "the objections that are raised against them; that considerable sums of money are swallowed up without profit, that the workman is acquiring injurious habits;" but on the other hand, he "knew the quantity of misery that had been relieved. Still he did not deceive himself: it was no longer *Ateliers*, but an *army* of workmen that had grown up, yet it was an army that, enjoying all the rights of citizens,

universal suffrage, and membership of the National Guard—was political, resigned and friendly to order. *Ateliers* had also been opened for women, and worked well."

M. Marie was a distinguished advocate, who had been frequently employed by the *National* newspaper, to defend it against Crown prosecutions for libel. It was to his successful speeches on these occasions, that he owed his rude and loose election on the 24th of February, to be one of the Provisional Government. The line of defence that he used to take for the *National* on trial for libel, was as singular as efficacious. He would make copious quotations from the most vigorous opposition speeches, delivered at times of the greatest party heat in the British House of Commons, and reproduced with added bitterness of commentary in the British Press. He would take the trials for libel in British Courts of Justice: show how great was the licence allowed by constitutional lawyers and judges; dwell on the love of liberty that signalized Englishmen, show how their respect for law had been increased by freedom in expression of opinion, and challenge French jurymen to mark that *they* were not less lovers of such liberty than their Saxon neighbours. As it was generally the case, that the incriminated articles looked pale by the side of

M. Marie's judicious specimens of blunt speech, the jury would feel themselves piqued into acquittal.

This gentleman's manner and appearance are more English than French. He has a fine bald head with a copious fringe of curly sandy hair, the only approach to the golden lock in an Assembly, which cannot boast one red head. His features are blunt and bold, but nevertheless refined. His dress is always neat, and his high white neckcloth raises his chin in a stiff quakerly fashion. His action is free from the redundant gesticulation, so much indulged in by French orators; and he looks what he is, a firm, intelligent gentleman.

We have now before us M. de Lamartine going to speak in his own name, or rather to read; and as regards M. de Lamartine, the distinction is worth making. When this gentleman puts on a pair of little black spectacles, and droops his shoulders, with which expressive action he is forced to read, he is an old man. While delivering an harangue with his shoulders thrown back, his arm extended, his graceful figure like marble set on its *socle*, his voice of trumpet-like sonorousness vibrating through the ears of his audience, he is ever young. The written address was very fine; but so necessary is it to captivate attention by appropriate action, that yielding to his own weariness as much as to the flagging attention

of the Assembly, he skipped over considerable portions of his review of the foreign policy of the Government, throwing out comfortable assurances, that all would be found next day in the *Moniteur*. His description of that policy amounted to a grand, and if true, sublime self-abnegation on the part of France, which renounced all ideas of territorial aggrandizement, yet incurred the incumbrance of an armed diplomacy for the pure purpose of countenancing the efforts of the democratic idea in other countries. That attitude alone had produced all the consequences of armed interference, and it was, he said, for the first time in history, that a principle disarmed and purely spiritual, presented itself to Europe, organized, armed, and allied for a different principle, and that the political world became shaken and modified of itself, before the power, not of a nation, but of an idea. The vagueness of M. de Lamartine's diplomatic circular, was reproduced in his speech; and for this vagueness he has been much blamed. An English statesman, patriot, or demagogue thinks of England; a German thinks of Fatherland; an Italian of Italy; but a Frenchman thinks of all the world. As soon as the Revolution of February took place, there was hardly a Frenchman who did not declare war to be unavoidable; not that the least apprehension was felt on the score of invasion by a coalition, but

because France would feel herself bound, according to her own code of honour, to carry her Koran in one hand, and her sword in the other, that all people might taste of the doctrinal blessings of liberty, equality, and fraternity, and all Kings and Rulers, who would stand in the way, be smitten to the earth for the glory of the Gaul.

In respect of what M. de Lamartine calls "ideas," a term significant enough to the minds of his countrymen, the French are at once Quixotic and intolerant. A Communist, a Socialist, or political discoverer of any kind, as soon as he has persuaded himself that his Utopia is realizable, thinks that he is justified in taking gun and sword, and carrying his views into execution by force. What political sects think and feel with regard to their own ideas, the whole nation felt as regarded their revolution in relation to neighbouring states. When M. de Lamartine, therefore, preached that the Revolution would, by its own inherent beauty, attract worshippers from all countries, and force its way *morally*, he was doing service to the cause of humanity and peace, for which the rest of the world has not given him sufficient credit.

It would not do for M. de Lamartine to talk like an Englishman or a German, for, in order to acquire influence over his countrymen, he must not merely speak as they speak, but he must think

and feel as they do. It is not by breaking with his countrymen upon an idea which has taken strong hold of their minds, that he could retain an ascendancy, but by presenting the same idea in a new and more beautiful light, and advancing it further than it had ever been advanced before.

Had it not been for M. de Lamartine, there would not have been presented a fascinating and elevating lure from the vulgar, and yet all-captivating project of a double invasion of Italy and Germany; nor could he break altogether from a prospect which he perhaps abhorred; and so, while he spoke of the moral effects produced by the Revolution, and drew a dazzling panorama of the happily infectious march of the principles of February through all the realms of Italy—through all the various provinces of the Austrian empire—and through the old states of the Germanic confederation; while he showed ideas, bearing the name of France, invading the greater portion of Europe, he yet painted this same France as animated at once by a democratic and sympathetic principle, with one hand upon the rights of the people, and the other upon what he called "the inaggressive *faisceau* of four armies of observation, regarding this movement of the continent, without ambition as without weakness, ready to negociate or combat, according as her

right, her honour, or the security of her frontiers might demand."

Here again he touched upon a delicate subject in speaking of the frontiers of France—those frontiers that had been narrowed as the Empire crumbled, until in 1814, there was no frontier but what had been traditionally regarded as such, and which in 1815 had been narrowed, so as to hurt pride and inflict humiliation. M. de Lamartine had laid it down that the treaties of 1815 had been cancelled. Then there should be war? No, not at all:—there should be patient negociation, based on right and justice; but in the meantime, there was this ennobling consolation:

"Her frontiers! I use a word that has lost a portion of its signification. Under the Republic, it is the democratic and fraternal principle that becomes the veritable frontier of France. (Applause.) It is not her soil that extends—it is her influence—it is her sphere of radiance and of attraction upon the continent—it is the number of her natural allies—it is the disinterested and intellectual patronage that she shall exercise upon the people—it is the French system, in fine, that has been substituted in three days, and in three months, for the system of the holy alliance. The Republic has comprehended, from the first moment, the new policy

that the philosophy, the humanity, the reason of the age ought to inaugurate by the bands of our country amongst nations. I would ask no other proof that democracy has had her divine inspiration, and that she shall triumph in Europe as rapidly and gloriously as she has triumphed in Paris. France will have changed the character of her glory—*voilà tout !*"

Such was the glorious ideal that the poet, orator, statesman had figured to himself. If he did not believe in it himself, it should be regarded as the nicest and most perfect piece of subtle tact ever presented to a people. All the attractions that war ever had were stripped for the embellishment of peace. The latent craving was still gratified by the aspect of the sword glittering in the light of law. Those who worshipped glory were still invited to the shrine, there to find unveiled a new divinity of hitherto uncomprehended beauty. Alas! the poet was too credulous; the prophet, as usual, was to end in the martyr; the sweet words that enchanted the ear, and shed harmony over the soul, could not transform the deep corruptions that were but stilled, not subdued into holy desires and lofty sentiments. Yet the good that was done by M. de Lamartine ought never to be forgotten. He flung golden balls in the path of the impetuous racers to the armory of war; and if the trivial,

but somewhat familiar metaphor might be used for sake of more perfect comprehension of meaning, we would say that never was such "a test thrown the while" to amuse and distract the dangerous monster, and give time for security, as was that magnificent scheme of policy, traced in such luminous language by the greatest master of phraseology of our times.

Although the statement of M. de Lamartine had the disadvantage of being read, it yet produced a great effect. The venerable Dupont de l'Eure rose from his seat, and embraced him like a son, amidst general expressions of admiration. Lamartine was at that moment at the *apogée* of his Republican fame; but, instead of the Assembly being allowed to retire impressed with his rich diction, it was to happen that they were to part affected, perhaps afflicted, by one of those vulgar storms, that became afterwards of too frequent recurrence.

We must pause to notice an incident that found its place between the oration and the storm. The President announced that he had received a letter from the citizen Béranger, which he had no doubt would afflict them. He resigned his seat, on the ground that neither his meditations nor his studies had fitted him for the part of representative. The Assembly refused to accept the poet's resignation, which, however, even such a mark of esteem could

not induce him to withdraw. Some thought that the privileged old man had been coquetting; yet, to those who had watched him, his resolution was evidently sincere. Béranger was not in his place in such a crowd: as he said himself, he was never at home except when chatting with a few friends. There was something exceedingly winning in the aspect of Béranger. He dresses in a plain, homely fashion. His head was a fine bald one. His eyes (and it was a pity) were hidden by large green goggles, from under which peeped a glowing, funny little nose, that well became a smiling, gracious mouth, beaming with kindliness and pleasant humour. Why should a mouth, overflowing with mellifluous good things, turn, after half a century of song, to political haranguing? It would not do, and Béranger felt it would not do; and he wisely took himself to his own little snug temple, identified with fancies, and dreams, and visitings from creatures very shy and reserved in their favours. Yet how the old man was sought after and listened to, and how restlessly he would turn on his seat, and quit it, to seek Lamennais or some other old friend, with whom to whisper in a corner, until at length he slipped away, and would not return!

It is M. Dornès who is in possession of the tribune—M. Dornès, destined to fall, a few weeks after, in the Insurrection of June. He lauded the

addresses that had been heard; so far so well. He moved that those who read them had, by their conduct, deserved well of their country: nothing better; the cheers were unanimous. He thought that the sovereignty of the Assembly should be exercised through a delegation of five members, forming an executive Commission of Government, until such time as the Constitution should be formed. There was no sign of opposition; but when he proceeded to give the names of the five whom he undertook to propose, there was a burst of disapprobation. "Let me read the names." "No, no." "No names." "They are, Lamartine, Francis Arago." ("No names! no names!") "Ledru-Rollin, Garnier Pagès, and Marie."—(Shouts of disapprobation.) The President himself could not obtain a moment's attention. At length the aged Dupont de l'Eure succeeded in getting a little silence, when he gently reproved his friend, M. Dornès, for compromising names. M. Dornès felt nettled, and attempted to assert the parliamentary propriety of his conduct. He declared that the liberty of the tribune had been infringed upon: the noise and confusion became tremendous. M. Dornès was about to leave the tribune, when other members, tempted by the promised vacancy, rushed to get possession of the place as soon as it should be unoccupied. His friends shouted to him to keep his ground. One cried out

that the liberty of the tribune had been violated; another, that the question had been badly put. The President essayed in vain to induce a moment's attention, until he should put the question, whether the names would be heard or not. At length he saw that the only way to stop the clamour was to put on his hat—the sign that the meeting was suspended. The last frail hold on order seemed then to have given way. The members, as by a common impulse, rose from their seats, and rushed headlong to the floor of the house, vociferating altogether. The wildest mob could not have exhibited more ungovernable want of temper. The manners of the demagogical clubs, and of the streets, were fully represented in that universal-suffrage-elected assembly. It was an ill-omened and menacing scene. After a suspension of half an hour, M. Dornès again spoke. He said that he would not propose names, but would move his decree, that the members of the Provisional Government had deserved well of their country, and that they be replaced by an executive commission of five members. All seemed then plain-sailing; but, no—there was yet to be discord. The boiling was over, but the bitterness was to come. From the highest bench of the extreme left, which had already been called "the Mountain," in imitation of the language of the Convention, there descended Barbès, the idol of

the ultra-revolutionary clubs. Barbès had taken a leading part in the *émeute* of May, 1839, an *émeute* which might have been a revolution. There had been a long ministerial crisis; the executive was embarrassed and weak, the National Guards apathetic and discontented, and the secret societies well organized. The Revolutionists hoped to succeed; but, after an ill-combined effort, they failed; and Barbès, one of the ringleaders, was arrested.

The main charge against him destroyed the romance of the political conspirator:—it was a cold-blooded assassination. He had drawn up to a military post in the *cité*, in a cabriolet, with a brother-conspirator, hoping to effect a hardy *coup-de-main*, by frightening the officer in command into a surrender. While parleying with the officer, and on his refusal to surrender, Barbès drew a pistol, and shot him. Such a dastardly act destroyed all sympathy in his fate. He, himself, became ashamed of it, and pleaded that the murder had been committed by his companion, who fell, subsequently, in the combat. He was found guilty by the Chamber of Peers, and condemned to death. His sister, who loved him dearly, was the means of saving his life. She obtained an interview with the King, and so wrought on the feelings of the Monarch, that although it was resolved at a Cabinet Council, to resist all recommendation to mercy, his Majesty

declared "that having suffered his hand to be bathed by the tears of the man's sister, he could not sign his death-warrant." The sentence was commuted to imprisonment in the Luxembourg, and the convict was so touched with the King's clemency, that he declared his political career to be for ever over. His own account is, that in his cell he offered up his orisons to *Saint* Robespierre, *Saint* Couthon, and *Saint* Just.

The Revolution of February freed Barbès, and the Provisional Government, with that studied love of effect which characterised so many of their actions, created the prisoner of the Luxembourg the Governor of the Palace, from which had already been expelled the Peers who had tried and condemned him. A more startling freak, in the way of poetic justice, was to strike the citizens of Paris. The National Guards of the 12th arrondissement, composed now of all classes, of one of the poorest and most populous divisions of the city, elected Barbès for their Colonel! Thus was this *victim* of the tyranny of the Monarchy, invested with rank and honour, and, as it may be called, military power, and subsequently elected to a seat in the National Assembly.

He looked, as he impetuously ascended the tribune, like a man whose head could easily have been turned. Report says that he was once a

handsome man. He did not now look very prepossessing. His figure was light and active, and he might be considered within forty years; but his face had that peculiarly pallid colour, produced by long close confinement—the colour of the cold wall, with that banishment of open cheerfulness, replaced by a dark brooding over his position, such as cannot fail of producing a repulsive effect. His forehead was high, but narrow, and somewhat bald. His speech was rapid and thick, as if he gargled his words in his throat, and sounded like vulgar scolding.

This Barbès made his *début*, by demanding an explanation of what he called the massacres of Rouen; and he, a Colonel of National Guards, allowed plainly enough to be seen, what might have been expected from him in case of a collision, as he continued: "Yes, in the name of the people, we have to demand from the Government an account of the murders committed on the people of Rouen, by the National Guards." This speech was interrupted by exclamations from all sides; but the orator continued to say, that the people would furthermore have to demand an account, why their German, Polish, Italian, and Belgian brethren had been abandoned? and when all these accounts were settled, it would be time enough to talk of thanking the Provisional Government.

M. Sénard, member for Rouen, vindicated, in a

warm speech, the conduct of the National Guards at Rouen. The Minister of Justice showed that the Government had done all that was proper. After some confused conversation, the vote that the Provisional Government had merited well of their country, was carried by acclamation. The question regarding the formation of an intermediate executive power, was agreed to be referred to a Committee, and the Assembly adjourned to the following day.

CHAPTER V.

M. PEUPIN, OUVRIER—WORKMEN IN THE ASSEMBLY—M. L'HERBETTE—THE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES OF HIS ACCUSATION AGAINST THE EX-KING REGARDING THE FORESTS OF THE STATE—CORMENIN—POWER OF THE PAMPHLET—BAC—JULES FAVRE—FATHER LACORDAIRE—ODILLON BARROT—ON THE PARLIAMENTARY STORM—THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORMED.

THE Committee that had been appointed to consider what would be the best form of intermediate Executive Government, confided the preparation and presentation of its Report to a working mechanic, M. Peupin, by trade a watchmaker. Thus, the first act of the National Assembly fell into the hands of a working man; and the first Parliamentary debate was led by a member of the *ouvrier* class.

Notwithstanding that the General Election had been by Universal Suffrage, that the Revolution had

been pronounced the working man's revolution, that the operatives were bidden to the Parliamentary Feast, for the first time, and that the tempting allowance of twenty-five francs a-day, was ordained on the Democratic principle of paying the legislator a fair day's wages for a fair day's work, so that no man should be obliged to decline the favour of his fellow-citizens on the score of want of fortune, it yet happened that very few operatives were returned.

M. Peupin proved himself worthy of the choice of his fellow-citizens, by his gentleman-like demeanour, his easy address, and intelligence. His report concluded in favour of a choice of Ministers directly by the Assembly; and, at the first blush, the proposition to hold all power, executive and legislative, was wonderfully pleasing to a new body, the more jealous of its rights, because they were undefined, unsettled, uncertain, and almost beyond the power of being ascertained.

Curiously enough, a proposition that seemed so thoroughly Democratic, and which was conceived in so Democratic a spirit—for it implied that the sovereignty being in the nation itself, should only be exercised by the Assembly, the delegates of the universal people, and not confided to any power that might be tainted with the image of royalty,

or exploded constitutionalism, with its division of power, and checks, and balances—this proposition was destined to be combatted by the revolutionists, and supported by ex-members of the dynastic opposition of the old Chamber of Deputies: M. L'Herbette, and M. Odillon Barrot, took the affirmative, and M. Jules Favre, and M. de Lamartine, the negative.

Our object is not to dwell more on speeches and debates than will serve our leading purpose, which is to mark the tendencies and dispositions of the new Assembly, to show how the new men acted, and how the old were received, to mark the hopes, sentiments or designs of the former, and how far they were responded to by the latter, to observe the turbulent fermentation of ill-assorted elements, and their reduction to order, as much by dangerous menaces from without, as from internal influences,—those influences being the chief object of our classification and care—to paint in fact a wildly disposed Assembly, sobered by degrees at the sight of the sword that was brandished in its face by a still wilder *demagogie*.

We have just had occasion to notice the excessive susceptibility regarding its own omnipotent power, manifested by the Assembly in the very report presented by Citizen Peupin; as we proceed, we shall see the jealousy marked by the extravagant and

fantastic awkwardness of *parvenus*, when their suddenly-acquired rights were not recognized, or were made the subject of satirical smiles, or ominous suspicions that peradventure they could not hold them long.

We have in the second place to notice that in order to quiet and keep down sensations not easily mastered, all parties made the most desperate professions of fraternal conciliation; the very word "party" was reproved, and the assumption asserted that the purest patriotic Republicanism being the sole directing power of the many-voiced machine, its separate discords, like the various sounds of nature, or of a crowd heard from a distance, would blend into an imposing effect. The intentions were good; we shall see how they were carried out in practice. We pass by those devoid of any particular characteristic to come to M. L'Herbette.

M. L'Herbette is a gentleman of large fortune, who in the old Chamber of Deputies sat on the opposition side—although not so far left as to be entitled to the honour of being a *Républicain de la veille*,—and derived a share of that spurious sort of fame, called notoriety, by having preferred against Louis-Philippe, or in the then more constitutional jargon, the *liste civile*, the dishonouring accusation of purloining from the State forests, more timber than he was by law privileged to take. The

accuser cited the various State forests of Villar-Coterets, Compiègne, Fontainebleau, &c., and he declared, that so extensive were the depredations committed, that in some places, the aspect was as if a hostile invasion had ravaged the ground.

Charges so circumstantial and distinct coming from a member of the legislature, a man of mature age, and of the weight that fortune seldom fails to bestow, produced a deep impression. True it is, that the Count de Montalivet, Intendant of the Civil List, answered the charges, and showed that a misapprehension had arisen from changing the old French mode of thinning forests, for that of the German method, which consisted of making clearances; but it is equally true that at the time of this unfortunate controversy, which was the year preceding the fate of the monarchy, a strong prejudice had been raised against the upper classes of society, by an exposure of a series of crimes—some of the deepest turpitude, from peculation and corruption by ministers of state and men of fortune to the last crowning deed—the murder of the Duchess of Praslin by her husband; so that it was no longer possible to interpose the barrier of the loftiest rank to the voice of calumny; and the conviction became general that all classes of people, the highest and the lowest, were confounded in a common and general corruption. The

charge against the King was fatally timed. It was but too generally accepted, and with the hastiness of prejudice, it was concluded that the corruption and viciousness, the prevalence of which was proved in Courts of Justice, had their source in Royalty itself. It was affirmed that corruption had been reduced to a political system, and that those who directed the machinery, did a little business on their own account. M. de Montalivet not only afforded the requisite technical explanations, but he showed, what was perfectly true, that the King so far from having a griping, had a bountiful hand; that he expended not merely the surplus of the allowances of the Civil List, but drained his private resources in the restoration and adornments of public monuments. That he gave Versailles and Fontainebleau to the people; and that his memory would be associated with museums, libraries, temples, and cities. This was all true; nevertheless the accusation worked its poisonous way, and it may be truly said that all the attacks of the newspaper press put together did not produce the fatal effect of M. L'Herbette's parliamentary *Philippe-ics*.

As I have the Vicomte de Cormenin in my eye, the man who gave the first blow of a similar kind to the Monarchy of July, I may be allowed to say a word of him, especially as his total absence

from the tribune will prevent any opportunity of sketching his oratorical physiognomy. The fall of the Soult Ministry in 1840, which paved the way to Thiers, and led to the breach of the English alliance on the Eastern question, was caused by the rejection of the dotation demanded for the Duc de Nemours; the author of the rejection of that dotation was undoubtedly M. de Cormenin, better known under his pamphleteering name of Timon. The pamphlet has been for ages in France a most effective weapon in the hands of whoever can wield it well. It requires very peculiar talents for its exercise, so much so indeed that the men of genius in that way may be counted on one's fingers, as you do the names of great poets, or of any other true greatness. Timon is the pamphleteer of this day, as Paul Louis Courier was the pamphleteer of the Restoration. Voltaire it was who swept the ground with this fire of raillery, satire, sarcasm, and pungent common-sense reasoning; that blending of seething fire and hard substance, scalding, irony and racy playfulness, with knowledge of mankind and their affairs, and withal solid logic, which make up the pamphlet, as it is managed and understood by Timon. As Voltaire was the precursor of 1789, Timon was the precursor of 1848; those who came after, battered the building and did the rough work: —he laid the mine. Whether his calculations were

true or false, whether his elaborate figures were calumnies or mistakes, whether the fortune of Louis-Philippe was overrated, and ought to be applied to the support of his family, whether all this was true or not, the project of the dotation fell before the pamphlet of Timon, and the cutting away of all dotations for the future was small evil compared with the discredit that attended the failure. The Ministry were themselves paralyzed, and put the question to the vote without a speech—were beaten and fell.

Now look at Timon, he is a man of mild thoughtful countenance, of a fair brow, and quiet, reflective eye. His attire is plain and unostentatious. He looks as if he would not hurt a fly. His voice is never heard, and yet he does not look unsocial. How could he be who has written the "Livre des Orateurs." He who cannot speak himself, has glorified his more gifted colleagues. How graphically has he pourtrayed them!—how cordially has he dwelt on the rare powers of his own political opponents!—loving talent for its own sake. Now look at L'Herbette the Omega of this Alpha; his little features are as hard as flint, and his voice cuts like a saw. He called on the Assembly to name directly their own Ministers, because it would be an act of energy, and because they could then call their Ministers to account. This was putting

the question on no gracious grounds. Such a man was not made for conciliation, and so he went on:

"I know perfectly that attempts are making to intimidate us, (murmurs from the left); for the intimidatory system has not departed with the old Chamber." (Explosion of murmurs from the left).

Le Citoyen Jean Reynaud.—"Instead of speaking of conciliation, you speak of intimidation. It is an injustice to the party sitting on these benches."

Le Citoyen Sarrut.—"There are no parties here—there is no other desire than that of conciliation." Proceeding a little further, he went on to assume, that in case their decisions should bring about a conflict, they would, in consequence of their nomination by universal suffrage, have the people under the uniform of the National Guard and all the workmen against them. Here again he touched a discordant note.

Le Citoyen Basinier, subsequently distinguished as a Red Republican, shouted out: "No provocation, or we shall reply."

Le Citoyen Vignerte.—"I protest against alarmists. They are enemies of the Republic."

Le Citoyen Jules Favre.—"It is an incitement to civil war. Keep to the question."

Le Citoyen L'Herbette.—"You protest then against what I say?"

Numerous voices from the left.—"Yes, yes."

And, after a few words of explanation, Citoyen L'Herbette withdrew.

It was now evident that even the claims of such a man as M. L'Herbette could not absolve him in the eyes of the new men, the *Républicains de la veille ;* and that the loud professions that there were no parties, could not prevent explosions of party humour on the slightest provocation.

We pass over some intermediate speakers of no note, to come to Theodore Bac ; and we come to Theodore Bac because he is one of the new public men, for whom, on account of his extreme opinions, there was no place under the monarchy. M. Bac, like Barbès, descended from the Mountain to the tribune. His manner is earnest,—earnestness which is not put on by the advocate, for he is a member of the bar. He has a fresh, florid countenance, but weak, irresolute eye, betraying that his heat of style is transitory rather than habitual. His language, although forcibly delivered, is not terse, but diffuse. His conclusion was for an adjournment of the question until such time as the members of the Assembly should come to know one another better. M. Bac, although Red Republican and Socialist of the school of Louis Blanc, does not seem destined to play a notable part in the stormy scenes of a revolution. Some one said of

him that he was a Girondist who had strayed into a club of Jacobins.

Citoyen Jules Favre is a different sort of man. He entered the Assembly with a certain amount of reputation. Known to the bar, he was taken by the hand by the Republican Minister of the Interior, who made him his secretary, guide, councillor, and friend. Favre was identified with the worst acts of M. Ledru-Rollin's government—if he were not indeed their prompter. For a young man, his appearance is peculiarly disagreeable; not that he is not possessed of the advantages of a good figure; but there is in the hard immobility of his pale features a concentrated white heat of malevolent anger, that, provoked, would be implacable. His look through his spectacles is fixed and coldly searching, and his stiff manner of holding his head, with the chin drawn in, so that when he turns the head, the shoulders and body go together, as if all were of a piece without joints, gives him a dogmatic air, by no means captivating. His voice is, nevertheless, flexible and clear, his reasoning strong, his logic piercing and sure, and would be perfect in its way, only for the occasional diffuseness, the besetting sin of *avocats*, and the bad faith of the unquiet, ambitious partizan. Such a man was never made to be a tribune of the people. As the active agent

of a well-grounded, unquestioned power, he would be at home. You might expect to meet such a combination of intolerance and affected suppleness in the innermost sanctuary of a General of the Jesuits, or by the side of a De Retz, pulling the wires at once of the populace and the Court; but it is a singular proof of Ledru-Rollin's want of insight that he should have placed his impetuous and imprudent nature in the hands of so young a Mephistophiles.

M. Favre is of that order of democrats who are so from jealousy of those above, rather than from love of those beneath them. His liberty is but the mask of his intolerance; and it is highly characteristic of the man that, from the first moment, he assumed an air of authoritative domineering that revolted the Assembly, and lost him the place which, with a little modesty, his undoubted talents would have secured him. Nevertheless, it cannot be predicted of such a man, as of Theodore Bac,—should the Republic last for some years—what position he might be called upon to sustain, for he has talents and force of character to make him a formidable foe, and he has no scruples to withhold his vindictiveness.

The reasoning of Jules Favre was that of a man who, despite his democratic professions, leant to the exercise of strong executive powers. He would

not admit the introduction of so strange a principle as that of a loose assembly of nine hundred persons, standing in the place of a monarch or president, making and revoking ministers, according to passion or whim. It was a barbarous method, contrary to that of civilized societies, which had all agreed on placing an intermediate power between the legislation and administration—a power ever armed and ever ready to execute the national will with rapidity and security.

It is not necessary to detail the reasons presented by M. Favre for rejecting the conclusion of the commission, because there are few English readers who would not admit at once its absurdity; but it deserves to be noted as a curious fact, that this conclusion, so agreeable to a new popular body, fancying itself endowed with all virtues, and full of expansive sentiments of fraternity and zeal, should have been encouraged by old practised legislators. It was, therefore, no easy task encountered by M. Favre, and he accomplished it with signal ability. He did not omit to season his discourse with epigrams, at the expense of men of recent convictions, recalling thus with bad taste his own too notorious distinction of *Républicains de la veille*. He showed, too, that he was not a man to be blinded by illusions; while his friends were indulging in philanthropic visions for having shown the necessity

of a compact execution in case of war, he proceeded to argue, that it would be no less necessary in case of civil commotion, and to civil commotion he looked forward. "What!" asked he, "do you believe that we shall found a Republic without agitations and shocks? Do you think that there will be no resistances to dread? Do you believe that we shall not see conspiracies and *émeutes?* (cries of No, and Yes; and prolonged movement). If you believe that you can found a popular government three months after the fall of a monarchy, without any emotion being caused in the country, then I descend from this tribune, I quit the Assembly, and I leave you alone in your opinion." This was language calculated to bring people to their senses, and it succeeded.

If truth be stranger than fiction, there are, in public assemblies, contrasts more dramatic than stage writers have fancied. This was exemplified in the figure and character of the individual whom one of the pointed epigrams of the last speaker excited to the tribune. His thin figure, attired in the white robe of a Dominican friar—which he never exchanged for any other—the Abbé Lacordaire descended not slowly, but impetuously, from his seat on the left, halted for a moment in the midst of the *salle*, and, with a hand raised towards the President, from which fell the large drapery, sig-

nified his intention to speak. No theatrical *entrée* could have been more striking. The looks of curiosity which followed him from all sides, made him the central figure of a highly-ornamented picture. No clumsy or vulgar-looking monk—no sour, or wild, or stupid fanatic was he; but, in appearance, one of the most *distingué* and gentlemanly persons it was ever one's good fortune to see. A handsome oval face, large lustrous eyes, and fine head, rose above the tribune; and when he spoke, it was not with the cold insinuating tone of the confessor. He declared that he would not have addressed them, but for an insinuation of the *pre-opinant*, that there were persons in that Assembly who were actuated by lurking motives of a hostile character. For his own part, so far was he from being there to join in a vote injurious to the Republic, he would vote for the Executive Commission. He acknowledged that he was not a Republican before the 24th of February; and although he now fully adopted the Republic, yet he felt that the Government properly belonged to those whose opinions were of older date than his own: but while he did this act of justice to elder Republicans, he claimed for the minority respect; for they had seen that majorities might perish, and minorities make their principles prevail. The sentiments were good, but the delivery was little in accordance with received notions of parliamentary

manner. It was extremely impassioned and vehement. As he complained of the insinuations that he repelled, his voice was as piercing as if he were wrenching, with both hands, from his breast, a dart that was there rankling. As a pulpit oration, or an exhortation to subdue animosity to forget and forgive, and to join fraternally to heal the wounds of the country, it was not unworthy of the Dominican's fame; but, as a parliamentary speech, it was a failure, and that from no fault of the orator.

There are rules of harmony applicable to all situations, any violation of which will not be atoned for separate excellence. In the frenzied times of 1789, the fantastic was in its place; but in the National Assembly, where the fantastic was only acted badly by a few, and saddened the sober many, there was no encouragement even for sincerity in an antiquated costume. The shrill voice of the speaker, his attenuated figure, and nervous vivacity, gave him more the appearance of an Arab chief in his bournou, exhibiting for his conquerors, than a divine, anxious to infuse the spirit of charity, and good feeling, among an auditory profoundly divided amongst themselves, and distrustful of one another. It was whispered about at the time (for there are always romantic traditions at the service of any handsome man who enchains to his heel the society he has renounced) that Lacordaire was in early youth

smitten with a love for the stage, and took lessons from Talma, from whom he derived his taste for costume and knowledge of effect; that he forsook the tragic muse for the bar, and deserted the bar for the Church—a love tale, of course, accounts for his disgust for the world. When in the Church, he accompanied Lamennais to the brink of heresy, from which he started back affrighted; yet the poetry of his nature led him to the Order over which the fate of Savonarola sheds an immortal interest. Methinks we have found, at length, the key to the citizen friar's conduct—he would be the modern Savonarola; he would reconcile democracy with the Church; he makes brave efforts to do so in his journal, the *Ere Nouvelle;* and has brought on his shoulders the anger of the *Univers,* and of that doughty layman, the Count de Montalembert. The Assembly was only permitted to have a passing glimpse of this brilliant and interesting meteor, for, after the invasion of the Chamber, from which we are separated but by a few days, he formally resigned, horror-struck at what he had witnessed.

Let us pass a couple of intermediate combatants, to come to Odilon Barrot, opposed to Lacordaire on the question of the Executive Commission. He, too, had been stung by the same sneer at recent conversions to the Republic and sinister motives. His first words were in the orator's most manly

manner:—"I am not stopped by this scruple; the country is juster than parties; it sees none other amongst us than men profoundly devoted to the liberty of their country and to the foundation of the Republic." This told well. His argument was, in its way, no less powerful. He showed that an Executive Commission of five members, appointed by the Assembly, and revocable by the Assembly, amounted to the same thing as a ministry appointed and revocable on the same principle; and, for his part, he would rather, if called on to act as minister, be answerable to the Assembly, than if appointed by the Assembly. It was a double machinery, for which there was no use, and which created complexity, without answering any constitutional purpose. Subsequent events proved Odilon Barrot to be right; for when a great danger arose some weeks afterwards, the Assembly, without wasting time in discussion, broke the Executive Commission, and substituted a single chief, identified with the ministry which he should form. Thus the force of circumstances led to the point which escaped general deliberation, of a ministry directly answerable to the Assembly; but created through the simple agency of a chief of the executive power, whose own views were in accordance with those of the majority.

To return to Odilon Barrot. What strange

reflections must have passed through his mind! It was he who presided over the series of Reform Banquets, which, organized by Duvergier de Hauranne, led to the fall of the Monarchy. It was the course which he himself adopted relative to the last of the series, that decided the fate of the dynasty. It was he who uttered the last words in the Chamber of Deputies on behalf of the Regency of the Duchess of Orleans, when that respected lady, in those widowed robes that recalled the premature death of her popular husband, and with her two children by the hand, offered the mute appeal of her respectable life as the best guarantee of a prudent and honourable discharge of the trust she was ready to accept. It was he, who, on the morning of the 24th of February, was the King's Minister in the palace—"the father of the people," out of doors; in the evening, was hooted by an armed mob from the tribune of the Chamber he would have saved by timely reform. Never had a public man been so buffeted and overwhelmed in the midst of illusions, and all owing to a want of that perspicuous power which enabled Napoleon to perceive the very moment of action,—a moment that will not stay upon the slippery brink; it must be seized by the prompt hand of resolute genius with the rapidity with which lightning cleaves the oak, or it is gone.

M. Odilon Barrot is an orator, and a great one;

well versed in constitutional lore, and with a bold, round voice, that goes home to the hearts of men; but he is not a man of ready judgment. After Lafayette, he took his place naturally at the head of that portion of the opposition that sought and laboured in vain to accomplish the veteran's sponsorial promise for Louis-Philippe, that he would surround the throne with Republican institutions; for it is a fact, that Lafayette never did believe that France was fitted for an unmixed Republic. There was this difference between the views of Odilon Barrot and M. Thiers, that while the former exerted himself to obtain a parliament purged of placemen, and a widely-extended suffrage, the latter cared not for reform at all, or rather was opposed to it; satisfied, if he could obtain for the Chamber, such as it was, the virtual government of the country. He wanted to deprive the King of his personal influence over ministers, and to erect the minister into an independent agent of the majority in parliament. "The King should reign, but not govern." M. Odilon Barrot thought it quite idle to seek to enforce such a maxim, so long as the Chamber contained fifty-five direct dependants on the Crown; and a great number of functionaries besides, dependent, more or less, on the minister of the day. So long as the King could, through his own influence, undermine an obnoxious minister, it was idle to expect that he

would voluntarily accept for rule of conduct, the "*Le Roi règne mais ne gouverne pas*" of M. Thiers. Thus it was that M. Thiers was ready to take the Chamber as it was, provided that he should have the direction of the instrument, unsound as it might be; while M. Barrot never would take office, except on the express terms of reform in parliament. True to his principles, and of disinterested probity, M. Odilon Barrot might, with more energy of character, have formed a party to which the country would have looked for guidance, and have carried to power; but, wanting the reputation of a practical aptitude for affairs, the most that was accorded them was an inactive esteem. There was enough of sentimental sympathy, but not enough of encouraging support.

It happened unfortunately for M. Barrot's administrative reputation, that he filled the high office of Prefect of the Seine, in the year 1832, when the palace of the Archbishop of Paris was sacked; and when, with worse than Gothic barbarity, not merely the furniture and building were destroyed, but the books, some of them of rare value, were torn, or burnt, or flung into the Seine. The Prefect, armed by his situation with executive powers for the suppression of disturbance in the good city of Paris, did not put forth his authority in the right way, or at the right moment; and, although it may be

going too far, even in the way of hyperbole, to say that he looked on an impassive spectator, yet never did Odilon Barrot recover the impression that was made by that event.

His conduct on the 22nd of February, is considered to have been deficient—fatally deficient in tact. He ought to have accepted the conditions offered by the Government, namely—to allow the guests to go separately to the Banquet, instead of forming a procession calculated to cause a disturbance of the peace; and as soon as the guests were seated, a *Commissaire de Police* would protest against the meeting, and his *procès verbal* be made the ground of a proceeding at law, for the sake of testing the legality of Reform Banquets. To a man whose mind was imbued with constitutional lore, himself a lawyer, such a proposition ought to have been peculiarly tempting. Pleading in a Court of Justice, there was afforded to him the opportunity of achieving a moral victory, and, perhaps, of laying the foundation of a plan for working through the institutions for the correction of institutions, instead of by appeals to brute force. By refusing the offer made to him, M. Barrot did the great harm of allowing the mass of the people to fall into the error that the Banquet had been forbidden, and that the Government had drawn the sword. His last act, wise as it was in conception, and noble as it

was in its attempted execution, only served to compromise M. Barrot with the Republic. He disappeared in the tumultuous finale of the Monarchy, a beaten, repudiated, humiliated man, whose name, inscribed for a moment on the list of the Provisional Government, was disdainfully erased; and one of the most unpopular of men on the night of the 24th, was the powerful orator and patriot—the leader of the Reform party for eighteen years.

M. Odilon Barrot, as his name indicates, is of Irish descent. His features are unmistakeably Hibernian, and of that order which proves that the native comparison to the once favourite—for now it is, alas! but a treacherous—esculent was well justified by resemblances that could not escape an acute and witty people. But although the countenance be of ordinary Celtic, the forehead and fine bald head are of a highly intellectual order. The voice is in accordance with so noble a temple of legal and constitutional thought—it is of the church-organ, rather than of the trumpet kind. The orator's manner is somewhat ostentatious, and his dress and walk are indicative of a strong tinge of self-satisfaction,—so far not belying the Celtic blood, either in its Hibernian or Gallic development. Such is M. Odilon Barrot, an effective orator, yet inoperative leader; an honest man, but vacillating politician; bold and noble in his move-

ment, until the moment of action comes, and then lost. So powerful was his language on the present occasion, that by a striking coincidence, it brought M. de Lamartine to the tribune.

It was Lamartine who repelled the Regency—it is Lamartine who makes his first Republican speech in reply to the last defender of the Monarchy. He acknowledged the power of M. Odilon Barrot, whose word, he said, had much authority over his mind on such subjects. He had nothing to add to the force of M. Jules Favre's reasoning on the necessity of an Executive Commission,—for he could not comprehend the position of a Minister obliged to come every minute to take the opinion of the Assembly upon an act that might require speed and secrecy; but there his accordance with that unsentimental man stopped. Referring to social dangers, he could see none. "I proclaim aloud, that I do not fear parties; the parties were vanquished, from the day when you appeared within these walls, before the whole nation, from which you have been evoked by Universal Suffrage, bringing with you not only all rights, but all forces. I do not fear to affirm to my country, and to history, that there is no party to-day,—there are no factions who can prevail for one hour in this country."

The Assembly was too young, too fresh, and too

ardent, not to relish such optimist sentiments; even M. Ledru-Rollin, in a few ardent words, showed himself an eclectic; but when the debate was closed, and an opportunity was afforded to the mass to show ingenuity by amendments, sub-amendments, suggestions, criticisms, and small speeches, the scene that ensued was of the most confused and stormy description, and such as filled the observing public with despair. The President rang his deep-toned hand-bell, till it sounded like the tocsin over a city in rebellion. Laying it down, he protested that no human strength could suffice for his duties. The guttural notes of Barbès, especially, were heard amidst the din, like the crackling and spattering of wood in the roar of a conflagration. At length, after extraordinary efforts, the resolution to have an Executive Commission, to be composed of five members, chosen by ballot, was fairly rescued from this scene of confusion and trouble.

CHAPTER VI.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMISSION—DECLINE OF LAMARTINE—ITS CAUSE—M. WOLOWSKI RAISES THE WORKMAN'S QUESTION—PEUPIN, A WORKMAN, OPPOSES LOUIS BLANC—FEELING IN THE CLUBS.

On Wednesday, 10th of May, the National Assembly elected, by ballot, the Executive Commission of Government. The operation was very tedious; but as the names of the five Executive Commissioners had been already settled, by that sort of subterraneous understanding of which parliamentary parties have the secret, the sole subject of curiosity was as to the relative numbers. At a little after four o'clock the result was made known.

Number of voters	794
Absolute (or necessary) majority	398

The Citizen	Arago	725 votes.
„ „	Garnier Pagès . .	715 „
„ „	Marie	702 „
„ „	Lamartine	643 „
„ „	Ledru-Rollin . . .	458 „

These five were consequently declared Members of the Executive Commission of the Government of the Republic.

Lamartine below Arago, Garnier Pagès, and Marie! The result caused extreme surprise, both in and out of doors. Ledru-Rollin, *longo intervallo*, last of all! The character of the Assembly was significantly determined. It had been returned under the auspices of Ledru-Rollin, who, as Minister of the Interior, was charged with the management of the elections. He had set himself to the work with his accustomed energy and characteristic indiscretion. His Commissioners, with no other responsibility than "their own consciences," and with "unlimited powers," traversed the country; and their acts showed, that while they literally interpreted their authority, they had, in conscience, a blind or treacherous monitor. They overdid their business, and instead of subduing, or deluding the people of the provinces, they excited their distrust, and aroused their vengeance

From fear, or prudence, the representatives—truly expressing the sentiments of their constituents, joined in proclaiming the Republic, did well their parts of factitious enthusiasts; but when their act was shrouded in the mystery of the balloting urn, they revealed, unwittingly, the true sentiments of the majority, by marking their disdain for the Coryphon of the revolution. Had it not been for Lamartine, there can be no doubt that Ledru-Rollin would have been extinguished, and the numerical weakness of his party in an Assembly, returned in the very ardour of a fresh revolution, exposed beyond doubt or question. If Lamartine had, on the other hand, listened to the overtures that had been made to him, and had he made a declaration satisfactory to the sense of the country, which was anxious only for peace and security, and trembled at the perspective opened by those who were subsequently called Red Republicans; had he given a palpable pledge, by an act that was conservative of property, family, and religion; had he, in a word, separated himself from Ledru-Rollin, he would have found himself at the head, instead of being but within one of the foot of the Commission; he would have had the darling ambition of his heart gratified, by being made the first President of the Republic; he would have been at the head of the country, and have taken his place in history

amongst those great men who—themselves the best expression of the best feelings of their own times—carry their country on a great step further in its progress to good, and stamp their immortal image on their generation, as if, god-like, they had moulded it all themselves. Be it strength, or be it weakness, be it true generosity, be it self-sacrificing magnanimity, or be it self-deception—be it theatrical assumption of an attitude intended to win admiration, be it goodness or amiability, be it what it might—Lamartine in covering Ledru-Rollin with his own blazing shield, and lifting him to power with himself, received that fatal whisper "Cassio, I forgive thee, but never more be officer of mine."

Very much might certainly have been said in justification of Lamartine's decision. Ledru-Rollin, thrown out of the Government would, it must be allowed, have been received in the arms of the Revolutionists, already dissatisfied with the composition of the Assembly. He would have afforded them a leader and a name. He was the unmixed democrat, the very expression of the Republic in February. Expelled from the Government, he would have been the expression of the Revolution conquered by reaction. A struggle must have come. In the Government he could form but a unit. He would be bound by honour and interest

to his colleagues, and yet neutralized by their influence. But the answer to all this was quickly furnished by events; for the struggle followed immediately, while the Executive was weakened by the distrust of the Assembly.

Lamartine did not probably estimate the depth of parliamentary dislike for the Ultra-Republicans. His ear had been confounded by the din of *Vive la République,* and his eye dazzled by the breadth and extent of fresh Republican devotion; but palliations of error will not do for men who take upon themselves the initiative of crises involving the fate of nations. His sagacity was at fault. His moral courage did not come up to the mark. He could not part with his distrusted companions. He failed to see the latent power that only awaited the voice of a competent chief to show itself in its immensity. He would have been reproached? true, and he might have been stabbed by a ruffian. But the confusion, and the complexity, and the danger besetting his situation, would have made the strong decision he might have taken his title-deed to the Chieftainship of the French people. From this day forth Lamartine was no more the same man. He who forbade the Regency, and who like an improvised Cromwell, put his foot on the bauble of the Crown, and led the people to the Hôtel-de-Ville, might have acted under the momentary intoxication

of a poetic frenzy, or he might have taken a clear, well-calculated view of the future. He was a rash or a bold man, according to the way in which he would sustain thenceforward the post he had seized. Was he a Rienzi, a Masaniello, or a Cromwell, or Washington, or Bonaparte? The first act of the author of the "History of the Girondists," only raised a presumption that he was a man of decision. His next, when he struck down the red flag and inaugurated the tri-color in a burst of eloquence, that can never die, was a brave act. From that moment the eloquent member of the Provisional Government had won his spurs. The marvellous eloquence with which he enchanted, subdued, and ruled France, will ever remain the most striking illustration of the sober truth of Milton's description:

> Resistless eloquence wielded at will
> The fierce democracy.

His replies to the various addresses from people of all countries, and his diplomatic papers were alike models of that prudence and eloquence that flow from exalted wisdom. It would be idle to deny that the career of M. de Lamartine, from the morrow of the Revolution to the day of which we are now speaking, was beneficial to his country. He directed the extravagances of excited passions

into the channels of philanthropic sympathy, by opening prospects of chivalrous adventure. He put a check upon the long-brooding enmity felt towards England, when, had he hinted invasion, the hint would have been obeyed, although ruin should have been the consequence. One act more—an understanding and appreciation of the majority of the Assembly, a separation from the Ultra-Republicans, a defiance of the consequences, moral and physical—and Lamartine was at the head of the country. Conciliation was the desire and excuse of Lamartine. He wished to reconcile irreconcileable elements. He fancied that he could talk down all difficulties, for he had talked down many. He who could still the passions of mobs, thought he had only to take a mob leader, or ruthless demagogue, submit him to the mesmerism of his influence, and take him into a paradise of pure visions, where he would leave the dross of his demagogueism. The Assembly estimated the motives, but their more practical estimate of men suggested that Lamartine was mistaken, and that the fate of the country could not be trusted to a self-deluding statesman.

As soon as the Executive Commission was formed, it was at once challenged to the consideration of the two questions to which the Republic stood committed. The great foreign question of the emancipation of nationalities, and the great domestic ques-

tion of the organization of labour. M. Wolowski opened both questions in the same speech. As a Pole who had become a naturalized Frenchman, he presented a petition from the Poles of Posen, Cracow, and Gallicia; as a Professor in the Institution *des Arts et Métiers,* he deemed himself competent to treat the workman's question. The man who stood forward so prominently to stir up danger, the extent of which he did not suspect, was a Professor and nothing more. His language was sententious, his manner cold, and neither were improved by an elaborate effort at warmth. The Poles, however admired as a people, do not enjoy much esteem as individuals in Paris—the needy and the proscribed seldom do. The needy must have recourse to shifts, that strip even the proscribed of romance. To M. Wolowski these observations do ot apply, for he had won for himself, by the exercise of talents and acquirements, an honoured position; but he was not effective in the Assembly, and that was all which was then wanted. As the Italian Question was held to be intimately connected with that of Poland, M. de Lamartine, as Ex-Minister for Foreign Affairs, announced his intention of treating both on the following Monday, destined to become memorable.

The Labour Question was seized on by a more redoubtable champion. Louis Blanc proposed and

argued strenuously for the formation of a new administrative department, devoted exclusively to the Labour Question, under the name of *Ministère du Progrès*. The erection of such a department had been his dream from the moment that he formed one of the Provisional Government. Had he pressed it, and made an appeal to his partizans out of doors, he would have provoked a collision. The Provisional Government, in order to give him and Albert employment, invented the magnificently deceptive delegation of tradesmen to take their seats in the Chamber of the Ex-Peers, with Louis Blanc in the place of the Chancellor, Duc Pasquier. Had it not been for this brilliant invention, the other members of the Provisional Government might have been thrown out of the windows of the Hôtel-de-Ville.

Upon the meeting of the National Assembly, M. Louis Blanc dissolved the delegation, and demanded the formation of this administration, as the fulfilment of the pledge made to the working classes, and as the only effective means, moreover, of arriving, through official and scientific approaches, at the final completion of the organization of labour. He was now coldly received by the Assembly, a regularly organized representative body, protected by the armed National Guard; and he was replied to by M. Peupin, the operative, who substituted

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the more harmless resolution of a Committee of Inquiry. They had, he said, Ministers of Public Works, and of Agriculture; they did not want to go on voyages of discovery; the workmen wanted work, and only work, and that would come with a revival of confidence and credit. Yet the Assembly felt that the question could not be disposed of lightly; they knew that at that moment there were loose assemblages of workmen in their neighbourhood, who were watching anxiously and menacingly the mode in which their question would be treated. To set it aside would have been impossible, and while a Commission of Inquiry was substituted, great care was taken to let it be understood that it was a serious and substantial inquiry. M. Freslon, subsequently a Cabinet Minister, hazarded the following declaration: "The National Assembly will, of necessity, pose all the great basis of the organization of labour; and if it did not do so, it would be cursed by posterity, and be despised by France." There can be no doubt that the Assembly was tried for the acts of the day in the Clubs of Paris, and condemned.

CHAPTER VII.

INFLUENCE OF EMINENT MEN—M. VIVIEN—THE NEW MINISTRY—THEIR DEFICIENCIES—M. FLOCON, THEIR SPOKESMAN.

THE sitting of Thursday, the 11th of May, was not remarkable. The rules for regulating the manner of their debates were discussed and agreed to. They differed little from those which had been followed by the old parliament. There was a great deal of confusion, disorder, and irregularity. A multitude of propositions, more or less trivial, were presented, showing generally how completely unaccustomed to parliamentary usages, or to the usages of public meetings of any kind, were a very great portion of the Assembly. It was evident that there had been no previous training, and the want of popular political education was not compensated for

by any apparent aptitude for debate. There was much squabbling—much talking—much badly improvised suggestion, and criticism, and for the President the Herculean task of keeping order.

There was one gratifying sign, however, amidst this Babel of tongues and moral chaos. Whether it arose from curiosity on the part of the provincial members, or whether it was owing to the influence always exercised by real superiority, certain it was, that as soon as a man of eminence ascended the tribune, he was sure to obtain a deferential hearing. M. Vivien, who had been a Cabinet Minister under Molé, and again under Thiers, and of course no *Républicain de la veille,* was nevertheless chosen to be Chairman, or as it is called, Reporter of the Committee for preparing rules for the government of the debates. He is a tall, mild, fresh-complexioned man, wearing his hair in that flowing way which the possessors take to be symptomatic of their Frank and aristocratic descent. For the Franks are to the Celts, what the Normans in England are to the Saxons—that is, the ancestral source of great houses.

M. Vivien's established reputation for probity, his temperate liberalism, the freedom of his name from factious efforts, and his sober *bonhommie,* won their way calmly and persuasively; and this mild triumph effected much, for it set the example of

influence on the part of the members of the old parliament, who would have been proscribed by the Ledru-Rollins, had the temper of the country only proved what they had expected to find it. The names of the new Ministry were announced in the course of the day. They were some of them under-secretaries of the members of the Executive Commission, while they had themselves filled the posts of ministers in the Provisional Government. Thus M. Jules Bastide, the secretary of M. de Lamartine, was created Minister for Foreign Affairs; M. Duclerc, the secretary of Garnier Pagès, was made Finance Minister; Colonel Charras, a secretary in the War Department, was made Minister of War; Admiral Casy, Minister of Marine. The Ministry of the Interior was given to M. Recurt, a medical doctor. Not one of these ministers was capable of delivering himself of two consecutive sentences at the tribune.

M. Bastide, although he had been a writer in the *National*, was obliged to commit to paper the shortest ministerial explanation. M. Duclerc, a young man of formal exterior, and wearing a long beard, as little in accordance with his years as was the solemn foppery of this capricious fashion in accordance with the plainness of mind and manner expected in a Chancellor of the Exchequer, the most dangerous of all

dealers in folly. He could stammer through a statement indeed, but the matter would be as bad as the manner. Doctor Recurt, like many other doctors, could only shake his head. The Minister of War could not speak daggers; and he of the Marine exhibited indeed a benevolent rubicundity of visage, but as innocent of political expression as the figure-head of a frigate. Now although M. Bastide is a worthy, honest, and even religious man; and M. Duclerc a gentleman of good intentions; and all the rest honourable men; yet, in the eyes of the public, they were still but the under-secretaries of the Executive Commission; and, whatever mistake might have been committed by all or either, could not have been atoned for by a change of ministers. A power, not in harmony with opinion, cannot last long; and the shape that the Government had taken was odd and unsatisfactory in the eyes both of the advocates for a ministry directly elected by the House, and in the view of those who looked in vain for an Executive relieved of responsibility by the mere removal of an obnoxious Cabinet. The other posts were assigned to members of the ex-Provisional Government. M. Crémieux resumed the Ministry of Justice; M. Carnot, that of Public Instruction; M. Bethmont took the portfolio of Public Worship, which was separated from that of

Justice because of the Jewish faith of the Justice Minister; and the Ministry of Commerce was given to M. Flocon. Another doctor, M. Trélat, was made Minister of Public Works. M. Marrast was created Mayor of Paris; M. Pagnerre was appointed Secretary-General of the Executive Commission, with a deliberative voice in Council; and Caussidière to the Police. All the members of the Provisional Government were provided for, with the exception of Louis Blanc and Albert. Even with the help of these supplementary names, there was perhaps never an instance of a Cabinet obliged to expound, explain, and defend its acts before a popular assembly so deplorably deficient as was this first legitimate Ministry of a Republic, about to propound the most momentous questions that had ever shaken society.

The leadership of the House devolved on M. Flocon, for neither the Foreign Minister nor Home Minister could answer the simplest question; and who and what was M. Flocon? His own description of himself is, that "he had been a conspirator all his life." He did not look a Pierre; he was not "a bold-faced villain." Fancy a small, bent, thick-set figure—a white, swollen visage—a dull, smoked eye; and yet this *habitué of the estaminet* had, by his attendance in the stenographer's gallery

of the Chamber of Deputies, and his subsequent contributions to the *Réforme* journal, acquired sufficient use of speech and language to enable him to shine, by comparison with his colleagues, although his shining was not brilliant. Flocon belonged, by sentiment and temperament, to the democrats of the Blanc and Albert school; but he could not make up his mind to separate himself from Ledru-Rollin, who had appointed him editor of his journal, the *Réforme*. It was in the office of this, then obscure paper, that the conspirators met on the night of the 23rd of February, and resolved upon striking a blow for the Republic. Flocon shouldered his gun bravely, and next day fought at the Château d'Eau, and helped to burn and destroy that post opposite the Palais Royal, in which, for a long hour and a half, some threescore Municipal Guards resisted till they perished to a man. Heated with this achievement, the mob, comparatively a handful of desperadoes, rushed to the Tuileries, through an army that might have crushed them, but which stood without leaders or orders; entered the Château; caused a panic that at this day appears absurd; frightened away the Royal Family, in presence of a magnificent display of horse, foot, and artillery; crossed the undefended bridge of the Chamber of Deputies; smote down the Regency; were about to

shoot M. de Lamartine by mistake; then followed him to the Hôtel-de-Ville. When a dynasty fell so, Flocon deserved to rise! Between cigars, billiards, and the leadership of the Assembly, how pleasantly must have passed away the brief period of his ministerial existence!

Dr. Trélat could speak pretty well on the subject with which he was worried to death—the *Ateliers Nationaux*. He is a thin, sallow man, with a melancholy voice, and began his speeches as if he was about to cry; and doleful, truly, was the burthen of his lachrymose lament—to which recurrence will have to be frequently made, as we approach the days of June. Well and appropriate as he could speak upon his special theme, he could not fill the part of orator for the Cabinet.

M. Bethmont soon resigned, and the portfolio of Public Worship was re-attached to that of Justice, to the satisfaction of Crémieux, who felt the stigma on his creed. M. Carnot was too cold, too reserved, too phlegmatic, for a speaker; and thus it happened that the oratorical team of the Cabinet, to drag it through the deep ruts and the mire in which it was so often to sink, and to show off on gala-days, was composed of Crémieux and Flocon, personally the least attractive of the lot.

The members of the Directory could undoubtedly descend from their imperial state to the tribune;

but, by marking more completely the insufficiency and mediocrity of their Ministers, they but served to show, that, in establishing one sort of constitutional fable, they had set up another of a very inferior kind.

CHAPTER VIII.

M. BERRYER—NAPOLEON BONAPARTE, SON OF JEROME.

A DISCUSSION as to the manner of electing a Committee to prepare a draft of the Constitution, filled up the greater part of Friday, the 12th of May. M. Berryer took an active part in the proceeding. M. Berryer, although his presence excited no mark of hostility, yet was he received coldly, indeed indifferently. He seldom interfered afterwards, although, had he obtained sufficient encouragement, there can be little doubt that he would have been tempted to indulge in the ample floods of his magnificent elocution. The chivalrous leader of the Legitimist party, throughout so many weary years, has been compared with Mirabeau. The comparison is only just to the extent, that neither were reading men; that both loved society, and drew their information from the conversation of well-

instructed men, who acted as store-ships for those mightier vessels of war. The tongue of scandal, which was once so busy with the ugly, Medusa-headed aristocrat, Mirabeau, whose fiery passions hurried him into a revolutionary leadership, and whose insatiate wants subdued him into the secret pensioner of a doomed King—that poisonous tongue has spared the handsome and luxurious barrister.

A fortuneless man, who clings to a fallen cause, especially when highly gifted, makes great sacrifices, for which he is no doubt repaid by those half-sad, half-hopeful moments of solitary indulgence, so dear to the finely-toned soul, and for which, perhaps, the tumultuous duties and pleasures of successful public life could not afford compensation.

M. Berryer was made for the Church. Had he appeared in the pulpit, he would have been the legitimate successor of the Bossuets, Massillons, Fléchiers, and Fénélons. He would have had no rival in his day. His voice is beautiful, and of that unctuous fulness which would have carried to the soul the cheering and comforting messages of the New Testament. Language bubbles on his lips, and flows forth with a copiousness that seems independent of will; and when language comes out with clear and rapid spontaneousness, so the man, appearing not to invent, looks a vessel of abundance; then

it is that people believe in inspiration. The speaker has not time, or seems not to have time, to arrange his words, pregnant though they be with mind, expanded to genius. With such a one, an argument may fail in logical precision; but an exhortation would be as a chorus of heavenly harps.

Berryer is in appearance a perfect gentleman. He is remarkably handsome, of the Canning style of graceful, manly beauty. He is too liberal to suit the tastes of every one of his party; for, like all great natural orators, he must be more or less imbued with popular leanings; and is not his instrument the congregated people in the persons of their representatives? The Legitimists preserve the traditions of courtiership, and of a courtiership such as was practised under Charles X., rather than under Louis XVIII., whose mind was touched with the philosophy of the eighteenth century. To the mind of Berryer, the Monarchy is a magnificent chain, binding, from St. Louis to the Martyr of the Revolution, the chivalrous history of France. To destroy the Monarchy, is to quench the sun of the national records. There is nothing in the Monarchy, no more than in the Church, incompatible with the easy development of popular institutions. Though all men should vote, there is no reason why royalty should fall. Berryer is no political bigot; he has no personal antipathies. He can enjoy the

witty talk of Thiers, and leave it to the public judgment to deal with the admirer of Danton and the worshipper of Napoleon. So expansive a nature ought to have won upon the National Assembly; but, as the advocate's position and popular disposition stand between him and some of his own party, so does his sensitive repulsion of low-bred coarseness make it impossible for him to place himself on a familiar footing with so undisciplined an audience.

In the course of this day the Assembly was startled by the appearance at the tribune of Citizen Napoleon Bonaparte, son of Jerome, the Ex-King of Westphalia. The resemblance to his great uncle is truly remarkable. He has the same massive classicality of head and features, the same deep olive complexion—it was the very head that is seen on the Arc de Triomphe de l'Etoile, and cast, as it were, in living bronze. Had Louis-Napoleon such a head, his popularity would have been hero-worship. As you examine the countenance, the impression is weakened, and the more weakened as you watch the man moving about. He is young, but not slight, as his uncle was at the same age; his look indicates quickness and wile, rather than profound talent. He seems clever, but of no high order of cleverness. Were it not for the likeness to *the* Napoleon, he would pass for a fashionable young gentleman, neither better nor worse than most

fashionable young gentlemen are. As he walks along the passage on the height of the right, presenting only his profile and shoulders between the back bench and wall, the moving bust might be taken for a spectral appearance of the Emperor. His business at the tribune was not ominous of good. He moved to have all diplomatic papers connected with Poland and Italy produced, to enable members to take part in the discussion of the Polish and Italian Questions, fixed for the following Monday—a day to be for ever memorable.

CHAPTER IX.

PETITION IN FAVOUR OF POLAND—BAD FEELING TOWARDS THE NATIONAL GUARDS—THE FETE DE LA FRATERNITÉ POSTPONED—AGITATION OUT OF DOORS—PROCESSION OF THE CLUBS—INVASION OF THE ASSEMBLY—ITS ATTEMPTED OVERTHROW—RASPAIL, BLANQUI, HUBER, &C.—A REVOLUTION OF AN HOUR—SOBRIER'S EXPEDITION—PANIC IN PARIS—ARREST OF THE CONSPIRATORS—NIGHT SCENE.

A GREAT muster of the Clubs of Paris was to have taken place on Saturday morning, the 13th of May, for the alleged purpose of carrying a petition to the Assembly in favour of Poland. Whether it was that time had not been afforded for preparation, or that Saturday being a precious day to the workman, while Monday is traditionally the great Saturnalia of the idle, or for the sake of masking their real intentions, only a very small body of persons assembled at the Column of February on the Place

de la Bastille. As the procession moved along, it was swelled in its course by the ever ready contributions of the *flâneurs*, and by the time it reached the Madeleine, the crowd was pretty considerable. There a halt took place, out of affected respect for the Assembly; a deputation merely took the petition, which, by preconcerted arrangement, was received by M. Vavin, representative, a gentleman conspicuous for his zeal in the Polish cause.

The petition was received as coolly as if the Assembly had been the House of Commons; and there can be little difficulty in believing that the manner of its reception was watched and reported, and employed as a motive for a further more powerful demonstration on Monday. It so happened that the day was exceedingly hot, and the wine-shops were filled in all directions with the members of this experimental expedition. The men drank and discussed, and the more they discussed the more they drank; and what with drinking and talking and the burning weather, and the incitements of malignant agents amongst them, they conducted themselves in such a way as to alarm the neighbourhood, and the *rappel* was beaten for calling out the National Guards. Such offence did the beating of the *rappel* give, that the drums were seized and smashed on the Boulevards, opposite the Foreign Office itself. This was reported

far and wide, and that enmity against the civic force, which already had begun to display itself amongst the *blouses*, although they might be National Guards if they chose, was very much increased.

A grand *fête* had been announced for the next day, under the title of *Fête de la Fraternité.* The project was marred by a public announcement on the part of Louis Blanc, and of the delegates of workmen who had sat at the Luxembourg, that inasmuch as the promises made to the workmen at the barricades of February had not been fulfilled, they would not take the places assigned to them in the Champs de Mars. This notification added of course to the prevailing excitement; and there was so much reason to apprehend that the fraternal feast would be of a Cain and Abel kind, that it was adjourned.

The proceedings of the Assembly on this day were, with reference to the internal regulations of the Chamber, with respect to its standing Committee, another matter; but the evident ascendancy which the old experienced ex-deputies of the liberal opposition continued to acquire, became remarkable. Only for such men as Odilon Barrot, Vivien, and Dupin, it would have been hardly possible to have extricated any subject out of the confusion and chaos in which all propositions became involved. The Ministers could not lead the Assembly; and

when their spokesman, M. Flocon, hazarded a proposition of his own, it was sure to fall beneath the courteous assaults of some *Républicains de la veille*.

Such a spectacle was not calculated to raise the Assembly in the eyes of the Clubs, who had indeed settled the matter in their own minds, that it was not up to the Robespierrean revolutionary mark. In such a frame of mind, as the reader may easily imagine, did the Club leaders pass Sunday, which, like some of the eves of the most dreadful events of the first Revolution, was marked by a terrific thunder-storm. This had the agreeable effect of tempering the burning atmosphere, and Monday opened with all the fresh geniality of mid-May. The newspapers that morning betrayed the presentiments of the public with regard to this Polish Question. It was well understood that a powerful effort would be made to commit France to the hazardous chances of a war with the governments of Europe—a war for war's sake—a war that would turn the Revolution into a Dictatorship—transform the Assembly into a Convention, and cause the Government to be exercised through Committees of Public Safety, while it placed the *bourgeoisie* at the feet of revolutionary tribunals. The banner of the Red Republic was to be raised, and planted on the ruins of European society.

There were two parties in the Government, and these two parties were called after the newspapers, which having been the instruments of their elevation, became now the organs of their policy and opinions. The *Réforme* pronounced for war; the *National* for peace. The language of the former, speaking, as was well known, the sentiments of Ledru-Rollin, was well calculated to stir up the passions. "The *people*," it said, "could not understand the policy of the Government; the *people* were indignant at seeing Poland in blood and tears. Were the *people* to see the promises made at the Hôtel-de-Ville evaporate in smoke? They did not desire to sit at ease within their walls, enjoying selfishly the benefit of their institutions. There should be an armed propaganda; for a close alliance with all people was the great law of French democracy. Hence it was that the bulletins from Posen and from Cracow had caused such emotion amongst the masses; the *people* wept and blushed. Would the Government," it asked in conclusion, "make their Republic selfish and cowardly?"

The *National* laboured elaborately to show that the Polish Question affected Germany more than France. Poland was close to Germany, and Germany lay between her and France. French legions on the Rhine would stir up the old German prejudices, and they would have to march through

a country converted into hostility by a rash and precipitate act of intervention. The power of democratic ideas to force their own way was repeated after M. de Lamartine, and council given, which was probably derived from the *bureau* of M. Bastide, that an address should go forth from the National Assembly to Germany and Poland, impressing on the one the justice of the cause of a violated nationality, and assuring the other of the sympathies of France. While the organs of the two parties in the Government shadowed in the press the divisions of the Council Board, the walls of the city were covered with proclamations from the Government, calling on the people to refrain from those assemblages, which, by disturbing public tranquillity, were keeping down trade and perpetuating private misery.

The Clubs, however, had formed their own resolution. They assembled at an early hour at the Place de la Bastille, each Club following its own standard-bearer, and some time after ten o'clock, the procession proceeded on its march. The inhabitants dwelling along the whole line of the Boulevards were astonished at the spectacle that met their eyes. The banners were, some of them, large and fawdry; all of red silk, with the names of the Clubs worked in gold, and adorned with

gold fringe. The crowd was immense, and marched in regimental order.

There was the Club of "The Rights of Man," from which had issued, a few days before, a truculent manifesto against the rich. On another banner was inscribed the title "Père Duchesne"—the name of Hebert's infamous journal, under the first Revolution—a journal written in the slang talk of the lowest people, and conceived in the worst spirit of the wildest Demagogueism. It would not be easy to call to mind all the names and titles, nor is it, indeed, necessary—for the statistics of brutality have but little attraction. It is enough to know the general spirit, for sake of guarding against it. Without prejudice, it may be said that worse faces were never beheld than appeared in that crowd, whose dream was of 1793, whose God was Robespierre, whose symbol was the *bonnet-rouge*, and whose weapon *la sainte guillotine*.

There were faces which fascinated by their very ugliness—the ugliness of brooding minds and callous hearts, filled with diabolical passions. At a moment of halt, I was spoken to by a man in a blouse, whose cold, glittering eye left an impression, as if a snake had nestled in one's bosom. There was that dead smile about the mouth, which is the unmistakeable seal of villany. It is as the corus-

cation of corruption compared with the glowing and gorgeous fresh sunlight of benevolence and innocence. I was relieved when the order to march took him away to join his hissing demons of war.

The fellow who bore the *bonnet-rouge*, or rather a piece of red-painted wood, cut into that shape, was the picture of a human brute. He had a small, turned-up nose, and a huge under-jaw, with more good humour, however, than others. The standard-bearer of the Republicans, who had been wounded in the *émeute* of the Cloître St. Mery, in 1834, carried his head on one side, and looked in that half-sleepy, watching way, given to the pictures of Talleyrand. Indeed, he appeared to be a common, coarse copy of the cold-blooded original, and was, no doubt, one of the springs of the movement. Of a man who was intent on a newspaper, all that could be seen of his features, hidden by an immense filthy beard, was an occasional glance of a scowling and troubled eye. A young man, evidently a leader, was so thin, that his clothes hung loosely about him; but his small, pinched features were lighted by a pair of large, wild eyes, indicating the utmost audacity and promptitude.

The master of the ceremonies sat in a low cabriolet—a fierce Revolutionist, a stout fellow, with a thick beard, named Huber; but suffering under in-

disposition, the effect of long imprisonment. It was expected that the procession, on arriving at the Madeleine, would have halted, and with an appearance, at least, of respect for the Assembly, have sent forward a delegation, as had been done by the *avant-garde* on Saturday. No such thing! They marched forward coolly, and with intrepid indifference. The bridge facing the Chamber had been occupied by some companies of the *Garde Mobile*, with General Courtais, Commander-in-chief of the National Guards, at their head. General Courtais is an old man, with a handsome face, whose mingled expression was, as before noticed, that of sauciness and levity. Pleasant and brave, without sense or judgment, was this man; and with a craving after popularity that unfitted him for his post. The leaders, who knew their man, dashed forward, whispered into his ear some revolutionary freemasonry, all-powerful over the initiated, and the *Garde Mobile* were ordered to draw the bayonets from their guns. The bridge was quietly passed: the foremost of the party scaled the perystile of the Chamber, others rushed into the doors at all sides, and in a moment the galleries of the Assembly were filled to suffocation with a mob that electrified the Senate. All the avenues were alike quickly filled.

This vast mass, vast by comparison with the gallery dimensions of the building, formed but the

head of the advancing column, the main body remaining in ignorance of the capture of the outworks. Those that followed, quietly marched along to the entrance at the rear, where copious room is afforded by a square, in the centre of which sits a plaster figure of the Republic, looking like all the cold unimaginative efforts of artists who believe not in Heaven, to give to abstraction a heavenly look, and only serving the purposes of moralising reflection, by standing upon a basement, which had been destined under Charles X. to a statue of the martyred Louis XVI. Around this brittle image marshalled the Clubs. The *grille* had been shut against them, as were all the doors, and for some time there was decent patience, until it was ascertained that the invasion of the outworks had been carried into the heart of the Assembly, when there arose a very laudable desire to take part in the triumph, and to wave their banners over the vanquished. During the altercation at the *grille,* a shot was fired, which caused a terrible panic for a few moments, but happily did not lead to serious consequences. It had an electric effect, although but for a moment on the Assembly, and on the mob within. That shot never was explained; no more than the shot that on the night of the 23rd of February rang the knell of the Monarchy. There is reason to suspect that it was systematically discharged to pro-

voke retaliation, cause a *mêlée*, and justify an overthrow of the Government, by exciting popular indignation. By a remarkable coincidence, it happened that about the time this shot was fired, a man was seized and made prisoner in the neighbourhood of the Panthéon, who was spreading the cry that at the National Assembly they were cutting the throats of the people. So much for what had passed outside. We must now look within.

The Assembly had met at twelve o'clock, and as soon as the ordinary formalities had been gone through, M. Lacrosse ascended the tribune for the purpose of complaining of the conduct of General Courtais, who had issued a most unwarrantable order of the day, informing the National Guards that it was the National Assembly that had decided on postponing the second grand fête of the Republic. The fact was not so, for all that the Assembly had done, was to receive an intimation to that effect from the Minister of the Interior. The circumstance implied certainly strange levity on the part of the General, and although the fact might not, under ordinary circumstances, have been entitled to much importance, yet at a moment when efforts were notoriously making to excite the people against the Assembly, it did look suspicious. In the absence of General Courtais, who at that moment

was about to commit an indiscretion of a more serious and suspicious kind, the incident was not long dwelt upon.

A number of petitions in favour of Poland were then presented. At length the regular business of the day commenced by an interpellation from M. Arago, on the affairs of Italy, which brought M. Bastide, Minister for Foreign Affairs, to the tribune. France, he said, had inaugurated in Europe the dogma of the Sovereignty of the People; that dogma they desired to see propagated, nor would they in fact esteem their own emancipation complete, so long as there were nations around them whose people were suffering. It would be to the eternal honour of France, he pursued, that her people, instead of thinking of their own financial and commercial embarrassments, pressed forward in favour of their brethren of Italy and of Poland. Yes, they owed aid and assistance to Governments whose origin was like their own. France, by her geographical position and national genius, ought to be at the head of a happy confederation of free people. Nevertheless, they had no right to go unbidden into other countries. If they did so, the prejudices and alarms of nations would be excited by the recollection of former invasions. They should first endeavour to reassure the minds of their neighbours, so that they might be persuaded

that France did not desire any territorial advantages for herself. They, the French, ought to wait upon their arms, ready upon the first invitation to join in the divine work of the emancipation of people. The treaties of Vienna were, to be sure, a dead letter; but he had no doubt that the day was at hand when there would be a Congress composed of the representatives of free nations, to regulate in a sure and permanent manner the relations of countries with one another. The answer of which this is the substance, not having satisfied M. Arago, M. de Lamartine announced that he would wait for the interpellation regarding Poland, to answer both together; on which M. Wolowski ascended the tribune.

He had not proceeded more than a few sentences, when he became agitated and nervous; shouts of *Vive la Pologne!* were heard outside from the crowd, that had by this time forced the bridge, and from the light structure of the building, being, as the reader is aware, composed of wood and very spacious, the shouts sounded as from a mob within the square on which the building was situated. Several members quitted their seats, and were rushing out to see what was the matter, when a voice was heard distinctly to exclaim: "The duty of the National Assembly is to be at its post in so grave a circumstance as this." The warning was

timely and had the intended effect, for the members of the Assembly, throughout the scene that followed, never quitted their seats, and exhibited admirable composure and dignity.

M. Wolowski endeavoured to master his emotion, and proceeded clearly with his statement, but the attention of his audience was otherwise directed, and the shouts of the advancing column, increasing more and more, at length enveloped the whole building as in a whirlpool of passionate exclamation. M. Degoussée, Questor of the Chamber, suddenly entered, and mounting the tribune, stood by the side of the advocate of Poland. A member begged of him to get down, and not make a ridiculous scene. Now M. Degoussée was just the man to make a ridiculous scene. Tall, thin, and sombre, with a sepulchral voice, and very ceremonious, he might have been taken for Don Quixotte himself; but in truth, he had encountered something more serious than a wind-mill. The protection of the Assembly had, he said, been assigned to the President and the Questors; and yet, contrary to the orders of the Questors, the Commander-in-Chief of the National Guards had ordered the *Garde Mobile* to sheath their bayonets. A murmur of indignation ran through the benches. A cry was heard that the "Salle was invaded!" "Summon the Commander-in-Chief to the bar!" exclaimed a mem-

ber. Clément Thomas, Colonel of the National Guards rushed to the tribune, and made his stentorian voice resound. A considerable mass of people, moved by a sentiment of sympathy for Poland, had forced their way into the Assembly, in order to present a petition.

This apparent palliation of violence was met by expressions of anger, and before the speaker had time to explain his meaning, the galleries were filled with a wild mob, bearing banners, shouting for Poland, and elbowing and thrusting the affrighted occupants out of their way. "President, clear the tribune, it is your duty!" exclaimed some, "There is no liberty here!" cried others. "Let Clément Thomas take the supreme command of the National Guards," boldly proposed M. Dupin.

Barbès rushed to the tribune, and endeavoured to take the place of Clément Thomas. Several members hurried to the foot of the tribune, calling on Thomas not to give way, and Thomas held his ground. He is a fine, tall, handsome fellow, with a fair beard, of not very polished manners, and a good match for Barbès. The National Assembly ought, he said, to protest against the violation of which it was the object. At this moment, the galleries were filled to suffocation. Amidst the shouts of the Clubs, were heard shrieks from women,

although the greater number, it deserves to be recorded, displayed admirable courage and presence of mind. By and bye the men in blouses, and in shabby attire, were seen to drop from the tribunes into the seats of the members, and before there was time for expostulation, the doors were forced open, and the *salle* was filled as by a flood that had burst its dykes.

It appears that just previous to this invasion, the last fillip had been given to the hesitation of the masses, by the appearance of Barbès, Albert and Louis Blanc, bound together by a large flag, in a fraternal embrace. This theatrical action, with some appropriate words by Louis Blanc, fired the fancies of the audience, who at this burlesque spectacle, took Louis Blanc on their shoulders, and rushed into the *salle*.

At the head of the mob, appeared Sobrier, Blanqui, Raspail, and several other leaders of the Clubs. Louis Blanc addressed the Clubs, telling them that if they wished to have the sacred right of petition ratified, they would act with moderation. It was Raspail who presented the petition, but on his mounting the tribune, there was a burst of indignant exclamation from the Assembly, notwithstanding the menaces employed against members in all directions by the mob, armed with

knives and pistols, which they openly displayed. One of the invaders stood upon the tribune.

M. Corbon, the editor of the organ of the workman, called the "Atelier," himself formerly a working man, left his seat, and forcing his way to the chair of the President, took his stand by his side, hoping perhaps to save him by his influence, or to share his dangers; and there he stood, showing his dark, mild, thoughtful face, in brave serenity. After considerable delay and great tumult, Raspail succeeded in reading the petition. Raspail is a man of European celebrity as a chemist, although of a somewhat spurious kind. He can boast no diplomas or University degrees, and is what would be glorious, if regarded as an unfriended conquest over difficulties of patient force of will—*a 'self-taught man*; but which, if it signify a presumptuous self-confidence, unwarranted by extraordinary natural abilities, is only another name for what some call him—*a quack*.

For a genius who broke a lance with Orfila, on a point in which Orfila is an authority, that of arsenic—which Raspail said could be found of itself in the human body, or in old chairs and tables, and so protested against Orfila's evidence in the case of Madame Lafarge, on whose testimony she was condemned for having poisoned her husband,—(into

what pleasant by-paths of parenthesis are we not occasionally diverted!)—for so bold a genius, it has to be recorded, that his name is not associated with any higher discovery than that of camphor for *migraines*, and camphor substitutes for cigars. He is a bold man, however, this Raspail, and headed a mob, determined to overthrow the Provisional Government when there was a whisper of backing into a regency. Like Marat, he lived among the Faubourgians of the left bank of the Seine, and set up a journal, which he called, after that of the victim of Charlotte Corday, *L'Ami du Peuple*. Such was the man who audaciously usurped the tribune of the National Assembly, from which he fulminated a decree for war, conveyed in the affected guise of a petition. As soon as it was read, the President was about to signify that it should be referred to the proper *bureau*, but he could not make himself heard in the deafening confusion.

Barbès joined his efforts to those who sought to have the *salle* cleared, now that the right of petition had been recognised, and that the people had defiled before the Assembly; but while the tribune was crowded, and the galleries were cracking (it is surprising how they held together) and the Clubs were marching, and the representatives were receiving insults, menaces, and even blows,

while weapons were brandished about, and while wanton strokes, as if of hammers, suggested the fear that there were some diabolical enough to endeavour to knock away the supports from the great wooden shed itself, the famous Club-leader, Blanqui, was fairly lifted over the heads of the crowd into the tribune, not to talk of Poland, but of a more intensely exciting subject, that of the miseries of the people.

Blanqui, like Barbès, was an old conspirator, and bore, like him, that unmistakable clay-cold colour, which is communicated by the constant presence of the prison wall. His features, when examined, were spirited and regular; a long, thin face, high nose, and high, but narrow forehead, such as marks men of enterprise rather than thought. But there invested the whole countenance a sardonic expression—an intense enjoyment of mischief—that would have formed a model for a Mephistophiles. This man had founded, in June 1835, the secret society called *Des Familles,* which merged subsequently into that of *Des Saisons.* He had known Pépin, who was executed for the part he had taken in the Fieschi massacre, and had been apprised in the morning of that fearful attempt, by Pépin himself, of the intention to fire an infernal machine. Blanqui was the leader of the *émeute* of the 12th of May, in which Barbès covered himself

with infamy by that cold-blooded assassination of an officer, to which reference has been already made. Over this Blanqui there hung a cloud of suspicion. In the archives of the police had been found by the Provisional Government, a paper giving the history and composition, the designs, attempts, and causes of failures of the conspirators' agents and followers; and it was concluded that Blanqui had furnished this confession to the Government of Louis-Philippe, for the purpose of having his own life spared, and the rigours of his confinement mitigated. The Provisional Government knew so well the dangerous power of Blanqui, that, in order to destroy his influence, they gave it to the "Revue Retrospective." The paper produced an immense sensation; but Blanqui protested with such energy that the whole had been concocted to ruin so great a patriot, that he contrived to maintain a certain leadership. The consciousness that he was not wholly trusted made him more desperate, and it would not be going too far to assert that this man, in whose heart, according to the energetic expression of Ledru-Rollin, was not blood, but gall, was capable of equalling the most bloody prototype that could be found in the revolutionary list, from Marat to Couthon. Such was the man who had been lifted into the tribune. He began, in his dry, caustic voice, by an allusion to the mas-

sacres of Rouen; but, as if the thread of his discourse had been broken by the wild shout of execration the allusion had raised, he turned to the subject of the miseries of the people; and his words being lost again in the shouts and tumult, he took up the cause of Poland, and demanded an immediate decree that France should not return her sword to the sheath until Poland had been re-established.

This speech was followed by frightful tumult. Ledru-Rollin at length obtained, if not silence, a mitigation of the fury. He declared, that he did not appear as a member of the Government, but as a simple representative. He assured them that their feelings for Poland found an echo in his heart; he also responded to their wishes regarding the claims of labour. He flattered the people on account of their good sense, prudence, &c., and got himself insulted for his pains; for he was told that he betrayed the people on the 17th of March. He would propose, he said, that the Assembly should declare itself *en permanence*, on condition that the people should retire. Some cried "Yes," and some cried "No." Many demanded the formation of a Ministry of Labour. Some said, "Let us retire;" and some menacingly demanded an immediate answer to their demands. Raspail and Blanqui endeavoured to make the people withdraw. Huber shouted

that they would withdraw, but that they would defile two by two, so that the Assembly should see that 300,000 citizens were watching them. An artillery officer, with drawn sword, leading half-a-dozen fellows, took his station behind the President, whom he treated as a prisoner. The President refused peremptorily to adjourn the Assembly; for he clearly saw, that if he did so, the mob would remain, and declare the Government dissolved.

Barbès, who until this moment had tried to soothe the people, now lost his self-possession, and fulminated the wildest propositions: an immediate army for Poland, and a forced contribution of a *milliard* on the rich. A shout of exultation hailed the latter proposition. The mob began to dance and cut capers—some bellowing for two hours' leave of pillage of Paris. At this moment drums were heard beating outside, which raised the excitement to frenzy. "Whoever beats the *rappel*," shouted Barbès, amidst roars of applause, "is a traitor!" The President, encouraged by the approach of succour, made his voice heard:—"I order you," said he, "to leave, and allow the Assembly to deliberate." Fists were shaken at him, and he was threateningly told to hold his tongue; still he repeated the order. One shouted for the organization of labour. Huber shouted for the *défilé;* while Raspail laboured to induce the mob to retire. "I

will have no more to do with you," shouted he, "if you do not vacate the *salle*." Still the shouts for a Ministry of Labour—for Louis-Blanc, who had been seized and carried in triumph—for vengeance on the murderers of the people of Rouen—for Poland—arose, while the drums were heard to beat nearer and nearer.

The President was threatened with summary vengeance if he did not order the *rappel* to cease. It was then half-past three o'clock, at which time a whisper was given to the President that he would have relief within a quarter of an hour. The President, in order to borrow time, affected to give the order to stop the *rappel;* and, had he not done so, he might have been murdered. Louis-Blanc, having undergone a triumphant ovation, was now placed standing upon a table within the *salle.* A sudden cry, that the galleries were giving way sobered the mob for a moment, but only for a moment; for the fury was revived by the red flag of the Jacobins being brought in, surmounted by a piece of crape. At this moment, Huber, who from exhaustion had fainted, and lain in the front for half-an-hour, rushed forward, seized the *drapeau rouge,* and, waving it, declared the National Assembly dissolved. Some, stricken with an act of audacity that went beyond their intentions, shouted "No, no!" But there was only a glimmer of sense now. The

excitement grew beyond all bounds. A piece of paper was conveyed on a pike to Huber, who was shaking his fist at the President. He took the paper; it was a decree, drawn up in form, for the dissolution of the Provisional Government. At this moment the President was turned out of his seat, which was taken by the artillery officer before-noticed; before whom was raised a standard, with the *bonnet rouge,* by a man who held a drawn sword; and President, Vice-President, and Secretaries, retired, followed by several members. On seeing this, one proposed that the representatives who left should be declared traitors to their country. Several read lists of names which they proposed as members of the Provisional Government. A general shout was raised, "To the Hôtel-de-Ville!" and "*Aux armes!*" At this moment, while they were squabbling about the names of the Provisional Government, the drums were heard. A cloud seemed to have filled the place, caused by the steam that arose from the dense and heated mass, and gave the finishing hue to so sinister a scene. The *Garde Mobile* suddenly entered, with fixed bayonets; and, as if by magic, the *salle* was cleared of the panic-stricken mob. To the Hôtel-de-Ville they went, proclaiming that the National Assembly was dissolved, and that a new Revolution had been effected. So like was the manner of its accomplishment

to that of the Revolution of February, by a sudden invasion of the Chamber, that the report was believed; and so paralyzed were the National Guards at the Hôtel-de-Ville, that the insurgents encountered very little resistance as they entered the building, which has ever been regarded as the head-quarters of new governments. The conspirators were now seated in a room of the Hôtel-de-Ville, which they deemed in their possession. From the windows they were throwing slips of paper with the names of the Provisional Government, which, strange to say, differed from one another—showing hasty and divided councils—but all agreeing with respect to some names, enough to make the blood of the citizens freeze with horror—when there set forth as strange an expedition from a house in the Rue de Rivoli, as ever occurred in a civilized city. At No. 16 in that street there is a house, which, as it commands some windows of the Tuileries, had been purchased by the Intendant of the Civil List, that it might not become a den of conspirators. As the property of the Crown, it became spoil for the Republicans, and was taken possession of by M. Sobrier, who, not having the Prefecture of Police all to himself, set up on his own account an independent authority. This house Sobrier turned into a fortress, which he garrisoned with a hundred *Montagnards*, who followed the fortunes of so hardy

an adventurer. He filled the cellars with arms and ammunition; and, so far from making any secret of his proceedings, he called on his old chum, Caussidière, for supplies, and got them.

Sobrier, a man of talent—and, if M. de Lamartine be not yielding to his amiable credulity, a man of religious enthusiasm, full of the poetry and passion of revolutionary idealism—issued a newspaper from his fortress, called the *Commune de Paris*, and it would be hard to say whether this paper, or the aspect of the wild and savage sentinels, in their red sashes, holding guard over their mysterious magazine, inspired more anxiety. There were strange whispers about the doings inside. It was said, that indulging in some drunken freak one night, a body of myrmidons seized on passers by, bandaged their eyes, and led them before a revolutionary tribunal, at which the future Coffinhals of a coming Reign of Terror were rehearsing their parts. After a severe warning against *bourgeois* selfishness, the prisoners were released, with a hint to hold their tongues.

So soon as it was announced that the National Assembly was dissolved, Sobrier, who had been disappointed at not being made Minister of Police in February, determined to secure for himself, by the laws of conquest, the Ministry of the Interior, and he marched, at the head of his expedition,

against the magnificent seat of the Home Department, in the Faubourg St. Germain. Had he succeeded, the telegraph would have been in the hands of the insurgents, and the provinces kept in the dark; for, at the same moment, another expedition was organizing by an ambitious Post-master-General. Sobrier failed, and was made prisoner; the energetic Etienne Arago protected the Post-Office, and the provinces were saved from alarm.

While lists of a Provisional Government were emanating from the Hôtel-de-Ville, and while the National Guards were assembling in the most resolute manner, as yet ignorant of the true state of things, the people of Paris were in the wildest alarm: the Boulevards were filled with people, the evening was beautiful, the whole population were out of doors, and in groups, asking what was the news? For half an hour it was believed that the Government was overthrown, and that men were standing on the brink of a massacre; all were heart-sick; but said that it could not last, for the provinces would march on Paris. What! Barbès, the assassin; and Blanqui, the desperate conspirator; and Louis Blanc, the Communist; and Raspail, the quack; and Caussidière, and Ledru-Rollin, masters of France! It could not be! But what misery might not be pressed into even a little week

by such men! The masses of National Guards marching from all sides towards the National Assembly, and looking so thoughtful and resolute, inspired confidence; and before an hour had elapsed from the period of the announcement that a revolution had been accomplished, the gladdening intelligence was circulated that the traitors were arrested.

Let us return to the Assembly. As soon as the *salle* was cleared of the mob, M. Duclerc at once took the chair of the President, and announced, amidst loud cheers, that the Assembly was not dissolved, and would resume its proceedings. At this moment, General Courtais, in his uniform of Commander-in-Chief of the National Guards, entered, and was received with every mark of indignity;—his epaulettes were torn off, he was called a traitor, and but for the interference of some members, who took him away, might have suffered severely from the enraged National Guards. M. Corbon, who had behaved so well during the trying scene that had preceded, now took the chair as Vice-President; and Clément Thomas, in his uniform of Colonel of National Guards, entered, and as his hand was bleeding from a wound received in defending the Assembly, he was received with enthusiasm. He announced that the Assembly was under the protection of the National

Guards, with the command of which he had just been invested.

M. de Lamartine now entered. During the invasion by the mob he had been observed to sit for a while on his seat, composed and tranquil as usual, but profoundly saddened. How his illusions must have been shattered! He did not allow himself to remain long under such impressions, but disengaged himself from the mob, and set about active duty. On his return he was hailed with cordial cheers, and having proposed resolutions of thanks to the National Guards, he proceeded to state that the conspirators were, at that moment, at the Hôtel-de-Ville, endeavouring to form a Government. "At such a moment," he added, "the Government is no longer in Council—the Government, Citizen National Guards, is at your head—it is at your head in the street, or if necessary, in the field of battle."

This speech was received with acclamation by the National Guards, now occupying the *salle* and the galleries, and every vacant spot. "Comrades to the Hôtel-de-Ville!" became the cry. The drums beat. Lamartine and Ledru-Rollin left the Assembly, and having mounted horses, proceeded to what they expected to find a scene of battle; but at that moment the traitors were in the hands of justice, and Lamartine enjoyed his last ovation. The

Assembly was declared in permanence. A confused and irregular discussion ensued on the profanation to which the Assembly had been subjected. Every half hour some angry or indignant speaker would be interrupted with fragments of intelligence: "Barbès, Blanqui, Raspail, and General Courtais had been arrested!" "Intelligence had been sent through the telegraph to all parts of the country that the Assembly had been invaded; but that order had been restored." "The regular departure of the mails had been secured." "Sobrier had been taken." Then the Procureur-Général applied for the sanction of the Assembly to the arrest of its members, Barbès, Albert, and Courtais; and this was followed by long debates on the powers of the Assembly. Lamartine re-appeared, announcing that the conspiracy had been destroyed. At length Louis Blanc entered, and was received with no less indignity than Courtais. He asserted his innocence, yet announced that he sympathized with the object of the demonstration; apologized for the conduct of his friends, Barbès and Blanqui; but was obliged to cut short explanations that every moment were interrupted by expressions of anger. In this excited way the Assembly sat until nine o'clock, when it adjourned to the following morning.

At this time the scene out of doors was singularly animated. The National Guards were all under

arms; and wherever a detachment was met, it was cheered by the people, which cheers would be returned by shouts of "*Vive la République!*" The National Guards, conscious that they had done the state some service, were happy, and, like truly happy persons, not revengefully disposed. The shocked and frightened people were not in quite so kindly a mood; and had the National Guards taken them prisoners, tried them by Court-Martial, and dealt with them summarily, they would have only responded to the impulses of the moment. That they contented themselves with handing over the insurgent leaders to justice speaks well for a body against which had so long been directed the malice of the Clubs. There was no possibility of approaching the Hôtel-de-Ville, where the prisoners were, all the avenues being blocked up with the armed civic legions. Many inhabitants of houses in the neighbourhood illuminated their windows, in testimony of their joy at the great deliverance of the Republic from so imminent and fearful a danger.

It remains now to be asked—whether the occurrence of the day was the result of a premeditated design? Had it been so, would not preparations have been made to follow it up? It is certain, that many who had joined the procession were not at all aware that it was to have been more than a demonstration in favour of Poland. The National Guards,

who had come up from the provinces to assist at the ceremonial appointed for the day preceding, helped to swell the procession, and *they* assuredly harboured no design against the Assembly. On the other hand, how explain the written decree put into Huber's hand for the dissolution of the Assembly? How explain the march of Sobrier on the Ministry of the Interior? How explain the documents found at his house, consisting of decrees prepared for promulgation on the Government being overthrown; and among which was a very remarkable one, stating, among other considerations why the Assembly was dissolved, "that the people, going peaceably with a petition in favour of Poland, had been fired upon."

The attack of the 15th of May was the third of the kind. There was one on the 17th of March, which failed because the great mass of the persons composing the procession to the Hôtel-de-Ville, were in ignorance of the intention of their leaders. The attempt of the 16th of April failed, because the plot having got wind, General Changarnier, with wonderful promptitude, called out the National Guards. Ignorance on the part of the mass, of the intention of the leaders, affords no presumption of absence of design. It is to be presumed rather that the leaders were not agreed amongst themselves, and that because they were jealous and

suspicious of each other. Sobrier, it can hardly be doubted, was prepared to push for an overthrow of the Assembly, and for the re-establishment of 1794 in its integrity, Dictatorship, revolutionary tribunals, Committee of Public Safety, War, and all: so was Huber. Raspail was evidently not prepared to go so far. Barbès was hurried by the impetuosity of the torrent into a premature line of conduct. Louis Blanc would have been satisfied had the right of petition been established, as it was understood at the time of the Convention; namely, the right of the people to march to the Assembly, and dictate its wishes. This being established, the real power would have lain with the Clubs, while the Assembly would have afforded the decency of legislative form. At the same moment, his desired "Ministry of Labour and Progress" would have been extorted, and he and Albert made Cabinet Ministers, and the real governing power of a Socialist-Communist administration.

The matter having gone beyond his intention, his subsequent conduct was marked with hesitation. He buzzed about the Hôtel-de-Ville, as a moth round a taper; but whether he dropped down to the Council Board with Barbès and Blanqui, is a disputed point. He denies that he did; but there is positive contradiction of his word by a Colonel of National Guards, who says he saw him; yet h:

might have been mistaken. There is reason to believe that the levity or treason at the head of the National Guards, the treason at the Assembly, perhaps the ready treason at the Council Board, was also lying in waiting at the Prefecture of Police.

On the approach of the Insurgents to the Hôtel-de-Ville, the Montagnards of the Prefecture, as if by common accord, drew out each man a red sash, which he flourished about his head, and then girded round his body. M. Caussidière, the Prefect, of course knew nothing of the traitorous disposition of his body-guard, and of their intentions to support the coming Dictatorship of Barbès, Blanqui and Sobrier, with the aid of Raspail, Cabet, Thoré, and Proudhon. He, poor man, lay ill in bed; but not so ill as to prevent our having the pleasure of describing his appearance the next day at the tribune of the National Assembly.

CHAPTER X.

IRRITATION OF THE ASSEMBLY—MARC CAUSSIDIERE—SURRENDER OF THE PREFECTURE OF POLICE—M. DUCOUX—LUCIEN MURAT.

THE appearance of the Assembly on Tuesday, the 16th, was sombre, agitated, and irritable. A corporate body feels precisely like an individual. This body had been outraged in its own house; and although it had courageously looked the armed ruffian in the face, and maintained a decent air of composure, whilst a trusty servant was fetching the police, it felt, nevertheless, a sense of humiliation. Poor Louis XVI. felt not more overwhelmed with grief and shame when, on a similar invasion of his palace of the Tuileries sixty years before, the *bonnet-rouge* had been mockingly placed on his head. It was not on the head of buffeted and doomed

monarchy, that the sign of martyrdom was now thrown. It was not even on law and legislation that sentence of death was passed by a mob, when an armed artilleryman took the chair of the ejected President, under the shadow of the mock Phrygian cap. No, worse again: it was society, as constituted amongst civilized man, that was destined to perish in a whirlwind of anarchy. Religion, rule, legislation, and law, with family and property, were to have gone together. Civilization would have disappeared, and cities given place to a desolate wilderness, for the tiger, the monkey, and the serpent—for blood, lust, and grovelling debasement.

The irritation of the Assembly broke out at once, and was manifested in a series of sharp interrogations, addressed to the President, relative to his having issued an order not to have the *rappel* beaten. His explanation was, that he did so to gain time, as he knew that in a quarter of an hour more relief would arrive. The explanation was met with expressions of anger and affected contempt, which were hardly deserved. M. Garnier Pagès gave a better direction to the excitement, by announcing the arrest of the leading conspirators, and detailing the measures that had been taken for the preservation of order. Anger was again excited, when it was told that the rioters arrested by the

National Guards were liberated by the police, while the *Garde Républicaine*, a new police force, were manifesting what their feelings were by shouting "*Vive Barbès!*" "Why was not Caussidière, the Prefect of Police, in his place to explain such conduct?" If he was not there, Lamartine was, to vindicate his conduct, and answer for the loyalty of his intentions. Lamartine the apologist of Caussidière! A deep whisper ran from bench to bench. Lamartine had given a stab to his own reputation. Already had he suffered by his obstinate adherence to Ledru-Rollin; he now suffered infinitely more by his marked protection of Caussidière. M. Baroche, an advocate of eminence, declared openly that the Assembly saw with dissatisfaction such a man at the head of the police. But an indescribable sensation was produced when M. de Mornay rose and affirmed that Huber, the man who had pronounced the dissolution of the Assembly had been released from arrest; and not only Huber, but Blanqui, had been arrested, and afterwards set free. At length, Caussidière appeared, and as he limped, or affected to limp, to the tribune, the Assembly assumed an aspect, which it was impossible to mistake; it was that of profound distrust, mingled with aversion.

Marc Caussidière is a study. Even in so thickly clustering a gallery of revolutionary portraits, he

stands out alone. He is the melo-dramatic hero of the Revolution; a sort of Grindoff, such as we recollect to have taken in our boyish days as the type of pleasant picturesque ferocity, in that perfect mockery of the unities called the "Miller and his Men." Perhaps it is the hat that suggests Grindoff; for Caussidière, has inaugurated a broad-brimmed, slouched beaver, with a high-peaked crown, around which there ought, for sake of perfection, to curl a red feather. This hat was not chosen out of indulgence of a capricious taste; it was the rallying sign of the chief of a new-hatted party, to which it was to be in the day of battle as the white *panache* of Henry IV. at Ivry. As Caussidière is a tall man, the hat added to his height, and he looked, as he desired, remarkable.

This tribune of the people—whose soul lay with the very poorest of the poor; who had himself in that weary chase after a calling, so often the lot of men, who brought up to no honest business, are afforded the opportunity of displaying a versatile aptitude for all—from coaxing orders for goods or advertisements, to anything within the range of the world of politics, from the premiership to the police—this now emancipated man from the galling chain of want, bedecked his ample person in the gewgaws of the newest fashions. The best dressed, most varnish-booted, white-waistcoated and fancy-

cravatted man on town, was the great champion of the *République Démocratique et Sociale.* Like George in the opening chapter of Kenilworth, he might enact the gentleman as he pleased, but under all, the *ci-devant commis-voyageur* was present. The head of the man is set on a short thick neck, which, with the low brow, looked animal-like and sensual. He, of all the fierce democrats, wore no beard, because his satiny, soft, florid cheek, could not put forth so Oriental an appendage in sufficiently becoming luxuriousness. Besides, this hero was not a man of half-measures; he would be bearded like the Grand Turk, or not bearded at all. The artful, yet daring soul, looked through a sly watchful eye—the eye of the crouching leopard. So much for the external man, which pictured harmoniously the inner. The mind was well supplied with samples of all kinds of knowledge, and exhibited with the incoherent profusion of an agent pressed for time in pursuit of customers. He seemed to have picked up some loose scraps of the heathen mythology, some disjointed axioms of moral and political philosophy, with a copious capital of slang, which he did his best to hide under the choicest Arabesque imagery, but which would ever keep oozing out, like damp from mortar, in which had mingled sea-sand. Like another chief to whom he bore a sort of resemblance, for he

might be called the Rob Roy of the Faubourgs, he would, when excited, drop into the real emphasis of his native dialect; and even the imposing aspect of the National Assembly could not restrain Caussidière from a rolling fire of *sacrés* that would rival a Gallic driver exercising his brutality on a horse; for of all men, the French drivers are the most cruel to their animals. As a specimen of style to which no description could do justice, we need only repeat one conciliatory adjuration from Caussidière, when collapsing into softness: "Let us put our differences into a sack, and throw them into the river Lethe." Perhaps we should add a profound political reflection in favour of brilliantly illustrated emigration: "That society was like a bladder, and when too full will burst."

A man so active and so accomplished, whose pen and sword made him a Faubourgian Cæsar, ran through all the casualties of a life devoted to the working classes, through the effective principles of conspiracy. He had been tried and imprisoned, and when let out, returned to wallowing in the mire. He was one of the Council that sat at the *Réforme*, on the night of the 23rd of February, and voted for battle. The victory was such as surpassed the wildest expectations or the deepest calculations, and Caussidière won with his good sword the Prefecture of Police. Installed there, he

set about the erection of a Prætorian Guard of his own, who took the name of the *Garde Républiçaine*, acknowledged no allegiance to any but their Chief, and amused their leisure hours doing police duties in the way we have seen, by letting loose such "falsely" accused prisoners as Huber and Blanqui, until Marc should sound the signal for the *République Démocratique et Sociale.*

Such was the man, who, like an overgrown hexameter or wounded snake, or sea-sick serpent, dragged his slow length along to the tribune. His exordium dropped so languidly, like thawing honey, that cries of *plus haut!* rose from all sides. He apologized for a throat that had been hoarse for two months, which as he naïvely added, was not his fault; and then he ran through a detail of the services he had rendered the State, which was not wanting in terseness and vigour. He reminded the Assembly of the rapidity, and indeed it was marvellous, with which order had been restored in February. Within three days the barricades had been taken down, and the streets repaired; the markets were supplied through his means; the price of bread and of all necessaries kept down; robbery, assassination and incendiarism prevented; gaming-houses closed; and that through the agency of dangerous men. He had, to use an expression, which although it has been severely criticised, was

no bad antithesis, " made order with disorder ;" he had no other than a disorderly instrument in his hands, and with it he did do good in the first instance, at the same time that it was felt how little such an instrument could be depended upon for any time. It might have proved an Aaron's rod, that having swallowed up all other rods, would become no longer a rod of Justice, but a scourge for society. Having, however, cleared the ground of defence, he turned accuser, and proclaimed aloud that he had demanded authority to arrest Blanqui, the leader of the conspirators, and was refused. So far so good ; but when he stated his own plan for preventing what had taken place; namely, that he would have moved for a deputation of members of the Assembly to go outside and address the people, while a deputation from the people should come in and address their petition to the Assembly, the dissatisfaction of the majority broke out in loud murmurs against so accommodating a Minister of Police.

Finding he had touched on dangerous ground, he artfully returned to his accusation against the Executive, who had reduced him to the part of a mere *gens-d'arme*. The *Procureur-Général*, as if stung by the accusation, retorted by repeating the charge, that at the Prefecture of Police, the rioters had been liberated, while the policemen wore the

bonnet-rouge. It was in vain that Caussidière could struggle against such an exposure, by pleading that his policy was one of conciliation, and that he was keeping order with disorder. M. Baroux exposed the existence of a fortress in the Rue de Rivoli, by the connivance of the police, and Caussidière openly defended Sobrier. A letter was produced describing the seizure of ammunition and arms at this house, which caused much agitation of feeling, until Caussidière, pressed on all sides, roared forth a *sacré bleu*, that set the seal to the impression made by his explanations.

Much of the romantic interest of this day's proceedings would be lost if we did not mention, that while Caussidière, like a stag at bay, was butting at the angry pack of interlocutors and cross-examiners, by whom the flowing elegance of his discourse was broken into the fragmentary, but more lively dashes of dramatic dialogue, there hung over the whole the mystery of a siege and battle at the Prefecture. Many an ear thought it had heard cannon, and some looked for an explosion in the same direction. The Minister of Finance was about taking up the gauntlet in defence of the Government, when M. Favre announced that the Prefecture was in the hands of the National Guards and the troops. "You are completely in error," firmly interrupted a bold voice. "The Prefecture of Police," retorted M.

Favre, considerably modifying his information, "is occupied by the National Guard and by *La Garde Républicaine.*" That altered the matter; there was a compromise; the Montagnards had made their own conditions. The Minister of the Interior now arrived, and announced that the Prefecture of Police was in the hands of the National Guards and the troops. Caussidière then rose, and angrily declaring that having just heard that cannon had been pointed against the Prefecture, he gave in his resignation. The fact was not so: nevertheless, the manner of the resignation was too good a *coup-de-théâtre* to spoil; the Prefect was out, and the Assembly too well pleased to call him back.

The ordinary business of the day was then resumed; it related to the national regulation of the Assembly in the matter of its debates; and, after some progress had been made, the sententiousness of parliamentary debate was turned into drama by the abrupt appearance of M. Ducoux, a fat, fussy, round-built man, with a fat round face, a fat round nose, and a big round voice. As an ex-veterinary surgeon, he was a better horseman than most Frenchmen are, and so he had been, *en amateur*, on a tour of inspection. He found at the Prefecture only one hundred and thirty men of the *Garde Républicaine;* the rest, composing a force of fifteen

hundred men, were disseminated in barracks. The Montagnards were in the Caserne St. Victor. The son of Murat appeared now at the tribune for the first time, and his appearance naturally excited much interest. He is an exceedingly large man, very tall, and very corpulent, and in no other respect remarkable. He came to recount an adventure that had almost proved fatal. He had been to the Prefecture, which he had found guarded by only fifty-three National Guards. He had parleyed with the commander of the Republican Guard, with whom he had remonstrated on the folly of a resistance that would cause French blood to flow. He invoked him to a surrender which could imply no dishonour. The answer was, "Without Caussidière's order, we never will surrender: we number fifteen hundred.". Murat answered, "I will return to the Assembly, and procure an order from Caussidière." "Never!" returned the officer, "unless he gives the order in person." Murat, however, resolved on going back to the Chamber, where he expected to find Caussidière under arrest; and as he approached a legion of National Guards, he happened to be mistaken, of all men in the world, for Caussidière himself; and such was the rage which the presence of the supposed Prefect inspired, that a sword was at his breast, and would have been

passed through his body, had not a voice exclaimed at the moment, "*C'est Murat!*"

Here, then, was a distinct statement, that fifteen hundred desperadoes held the Prefecture of Police. Seeing that an unpleasant altercation was likely to arise, some members interfered, and the order of the day was resumed. Before the close of the regular business of the day, the state of the Prefecture was again brought in by a more reassuring report, and the Assembly adjourned.

CHAPTER XI.

A STORMY SITTING.

THE sitting of Wednesday, the 17th, need not detain us long. It was confused, boisterous, and self-damaging; and, viewed in that respect, suffered in general estimation; a sad circumstance, at a moment when the Assembly was the sole governing power. Let us make a rapid *résumé* of the day's proceedings. The resignation of Caussidière was received, put from the chair, and accepted, and his successor named—M. Trouvé Chauvel. The *Garde Républicaine* was declared to be disbanded, and an appointment announced, of which the Assembly were far from divining the importance,—that of General Cavaignac to be Minister of War. Exceptional laws were presented affecting the Clubs—exceptional laws presented by the Ministry of the Republic, within a dozen days from the meeting of the Assembly! A

law for the exclusion of the ex-Royal Family of France from the territories of the Republic was presented. The Minister of Finance presented a bill for the resumption of railways by the State. The Minister of Public Works asked for a grant for the national *ateliers,* where the number of hands employed on unprofitable labour had swelled from eighty thousand to one hundred and fifteen thousand. All these were presented as of urgency, and were suggestive enough of a hapless state of society.

The confusion that had prevailed throughout the day was raised to a perfect storm, when M. Favre undertook to admonish the Assembly, saying, "This sitting must finish in a dignified and proper manner. The systematic disorder in which the Assembly seems to take pleasure must have an end: you must and you shall hear me." The admonition might be well-founded; but in the mouth of a young man, of singularly arrogant and presumptuous bearing, it excited universal anger. The members rose, as by common accord, from their seats—plunged into the centre of the *salle*—rushed towards the tribune, about which the angry stream foamed as about a rock. The President put on his hat, and the sitting was suspended, until calm was restored, when the astounded Favre offered an apology.

CHAPTER XII.

LUGUBRIOUS MISCELLANIES—M. DUPIN.

OPENING with lugubrious communications, and then falling into noise and confusion, so passed the sitting of Thursday, the 18th. A body of National Guards had entered an armed Club, situated in a *passage* in the Rue Faubourg St. Martin; the lights were suddenly extinguished, with the exception of one of gas, which flamed forgotten or unobserved, or was allowed to remain as a lure; the members had disappeared; the National Guards began a search, were fired upon, and some were killed. The funeral of the victims was to take place at three o'clock, and a letter to the Assembly asked for a deputation to do honour to these martyrs in the cause of society.

Another communication related to the town of

Limoges, where a collision had taken place, caused by Communist manœuvres. This town was described to be a focus of Communism. A proclamation, expressive of the thanks of the Assembly to the National Guards and the people, for their conduct on Monday, gave rise to such a Babel of sounds, that the President at one moment declared his strength was exhausted. M. Dupin extricated the unfortunate proclamation, by a timely suggestion to allow it to be returned to the Committee for correction; and, in due time, it was corrected accordingly.

M. Dupin comes so frequently to the rescue, and with such success, that a word is due to so prominent an actor on the agitated scene. It has been remarked more than once, how promptly the public men of well-established political reputation obtained an ascendancy over the Assembly, despite their newly-adopted Republicanism. Immediately after the invasion of the 15th, this ascendancy became more marked, and kept steadily on the increase, while the influence of the more fresh and fiery parliamentary novelties declined in a corresponding proportion. The parts which men take in public proceedings are induced as much by their own characters, as by the necessities which beckon them to their aid. M. Dupin assumed at once the part which ought properly to have devolved on the

President—that of eliciting order out of disorder, of disentangling the many threads of discourse, of taking up the poor belaboured question, and, with patience and skill, restoring it to shape. M. Dupin did all this in the most natural and inoffensive way; and this was the more remarkable from the contrast which it presented to the manner employed by the same gentleman in the more punctilious Chamber of Deputies, where his word was ever barbed with sarcasm, and his look as sharp as his word.

In the chair of the old Chamber, when M. Dupin filled that chair, a call to order would have been a chastisement for the offender. A question rescued from confusion, would come out avenged on the blunderers, as it emerged into light through a galling discharge of brilliant, but stinging words. The Jupiter of the Deputies stood in the Assembly stripped of his forked thunderbolts. His bearing before that rude and riotous body was that of a novice. He looked as if he felt admitted upon sufferance. I cannôt forget M. Dupin's first appearance at the tribune: he walked up so diffidently, with his hat in his hand, which he laid on the floor; stood sideways, as if prepared to descend immediately; stooped as the noise continued, took up his hat, and, with a short, graceless bow, was making his exit, when the homage of a sudden silence, broken only by invitations to proceed,

induced him to go on with his favourite work—that of placing the lost question in its proper light.

M. Dupin was always well received, although he was no longer the same Dupin, with whose caustic, wayward, unsocial nature, no party could combine; and whose eccentricity, or infirmity of temper, shewed that a mind of a high order was deprived of its beneficial influences on mankind by the admixture of some strange element. Whence proceeded that colouring matter which jaundiced an incomparable range of view? What was it that repelled with such subtlety, while there were so many gifts of eloquence and wit to attract? How could the judgment be so sure, and so false?—the feelings so warm, and so perverse? What nerve is astray in that vigorous, intellectual form? How is it that the strength that can deal with particulars in an all-searching analysis, yet cannot combine the whole? These are moral phenomena which cause our wonder, but baffle our explanation.

Dupin was, in the old Chamber, the one whose hand was against every man, and every man's hand against him. It took the Revolution of February to sober him—the strange aspect of the National Assembly to reduce to the harmony of a plain-reasoning, reconciling man. No man was, however, viewed with more disfavour than was

Dupin;—he was not so hated, because he was not so dreaded, as Thiers. Like Lamartine, he had long ceased to be of any party—he stood alone; whilst, unlike Lamartine, his proper connections never ceased to regard his isolation with regret, and would have won his support if they could. A man who, from no matter what motive, repels the attractions of office, and place, and power, possesses a certain claim on the respect of politicians. He may be cross-grained, or disagreeable, but he is pure;—or if not pure, he is self-punished. The fact of Dupin being the friend and adviser of the King rather raised him, for it was plain to all how easily he might have taken advantage of such a position for self-elevation; and this position showed, moreover, that he was worthy of trust. But there was one damning fault in the character of Dupin, his supposed identification with the *bourgeoisie*. He was regarded as the incarnation of the middle class, on which had rested the throne of July. He had that vulgar sense of the *bourgeois* which he, unfortunately for himself, resumed in an often-quoted, and never-to-be forgotten expression, "*Chacun pour soi, chacun chez soi,*" which is, in point of fact, the counterpart of Alderman Brooke's famous moral axiom, "Lord! every man is for himself in this world."

It was perhaps that instinctive sense of what was

most prudent for sake of self-interest, that guided M. Dupin into an accommodation with a new Assembly. He laid before them that plain reasoning, and in that plain way, which if it be not common sense, looks very like it; for common sense is, after all, most frequently the basis of grand views, and grand views shape for themselves grand language—bold, simple, and yet ornate. The well-read man, if he be at the same time a deep thinker, is led to that discovery for himself, which has ever been the charm of highly cultivated intellects, namely, the analogies which run through Nature, harmonising and combining all things through the pervading activity of some few elements or principles, and connecting as by a fine chain the world of matter with the world of spirits, until he arrive at the comprehension; that what we see only in parts may be seen by immortals as a whole—as one temple of finest proportions, filled with divinest harmony. The most dry subject may, in the hands of such a man as a Bacon, a Shakespeare, or a Burke, become most metaphorical, most adorned with happy similitudes, most plain at the same time, by means of well chosen analogies from the great storehouse of knowledge and reflection, into which shines the sun of imagination. But as the audience must be able to follow, or at all events appreciate this manner of stating questions, and as

all audiences do not—why then it follows, that the speaker, whose confined acquirements are most in accordance with ill-taught listeners will be the most relished. Burke was "the dinner-bell," even of a British House of Commons. For reasons indicated by these views, even lawyers can hardly be first-rate orators. Their range of reading is too special and narrow, their only analogies are those of analogous cases and decisions, not frankly sought after, but too often pressed and strained into the service of sophistry.

A mere lawyer was M. Dupin—a lawyer built upon the basis of *bourgeoisie*—as such he was a most apt adviser for the Ex-King Louis-Philippe, a monarch who would have made a model of a plain wise country gentleman. The King, with the same sort of shrewdness that belonged to his legal adviser, knew what his instrument was fitted for; and although he never would choose him for Minister, yet never would he part from such a lawyer. I confess that the appearance of Dupin disappointed me. I expected to see an eccentric figure, slovenly and careless in attire, but flinging from the pockets of his greasy suit, handfulls of the coin of a quaint, biting humour. He is no such thing. He dresses plainly it is true, but not remarkably so; very much like a man of mercantile pursuits; and when he puts on a little *bonnet grec* to cover his

strong bald head from the cold of the vast wooden hall—with his deep sensible eye searching through his spectacles, and his harsh-looking mouth, ready for plain truth or bitter reply—he looks like the man of that maxim, *chacun pour soi—chacun chez soi*. It was in the sitting of this day, that the Committee of Fifteen, for drawing up the Constitution, was ballotted for. It was composed of members taken from nearly all parties; in which, however, the well-known old names predominated.

CHAPTER XIII.

ANGER OF THE ASSEMBLY NOT YET APPEASED—SINGULAR DEBATE ABOUT THE MANNER OF WEARING SCARFS—THE 'FETE DE LA CONCORDE'—THE PARISIANS A THEATRICAL PEOPLE—ADAPTATION OF PARIS FOR SPECTACLES—WHAT TOOK PLACE IN THE DAY, AND WHAT AT NIGHT.

THERE was nothing of a marked character in the sitting of Friday the 19th of May. The Assembly manifested at the opening the same irritability relating to the events of Monday that had prevailed since that day. The subject of the conduct of the President was revived, and a good deal of angry altercation ensued about the order which he had given not to beat the *rappel*. The address of thanks to the National Guards was discussed, paragraph by paragraph, and, after an incoherent conversation, adopted. The rest of the day was chiefly passed in the presentation of projects by private

members, most of which were strangled on the spot, or entombed in a reference to Committees.

The proceedings of Saturday were of a miscellaneous character; an incident occurred, which excited some ridicule. The Questor of the Assembly, Degoussée, the most sombre of triflers, occupied a portion of the day with a decree relative to a ribbon which he had designed for the button-holes of members, and without which they could not appear in the Assembly. He had also a plan of a scarf to be worn on occasions of ceremony like that of the fête, fixed for the following day. A grand difficulty, however, arose as to whether the scarf should be worn *en sautoir*, *en écharpe*, or *en ceinture*. The Assembly voted for the *en écharpe*, but like the famous decree of the Provisional Government relative to the white waistcoat and rolling collar, the law was quietly abrogated by the passive resistance of members. The day closed with the important announcement from M. de Lamartine, that he would on the following Tuesday treat of the questions of Poland and Italy, interrupted by the invasion of the last Monday.

We must now follow the National Assembly to the Champ de Mars, where it marched on Sunday the 21st, to take part in the *Fête de la Concorde*. There, mounted upon an estrade raised against the Ecole Militaire, the members of the Executive Com-

mission in front, the National Guards of Paris and the Provinces were passed in review.

The French are a theatrical people; that is to say, a people fond of representations that strike the senses agreeably. Their fancy takes its light through the eye. As Sheridan could only write his witty artificialities in the midst of a blaze of wax-tapers, so French enthusiasm requires military display as an artistical setting by day, and fire-works by night. When Napoleon wanted to turn off attention from the disasters of Moscow, he ordered the dome of the Invalides to be gilded. For two months, M. de Lamartine ruled or amused, which was the same thing, the French by imagery. The panoramic picture of "the tri-coloured flag making the tour of the world," amused the people, and did the purposes of Government until the great Magician was prepared with another dissolving view. The more *matériel* associates in the Government, got up processions to the Bastille, monster reviews, and monster fêtes; but novelty is the law of the theatrical art, invention must flag betimes, and then the people are apt to turn actors on their own account, and their dramas have a fearful reality, very unlike the pageantry of charlatan rulers at their wit's end.

If the French be a theatrical people, assuredly Paris is the theatre of cities. Never did a city

shape itself better to refined sensual necessities. For a procession to the Column of February, what more picturesque line could be found than the Boulevards, which, with unvarying width, presents alternations of elevation and descent, and follows the zig-zag deviations of the bulwark from which the name is derived. The houses and buildings of white stone, softened and harmonised by green trees—that wedding of Art and Nature, that sweet blending of town and country, of freshness with heat and hardness; these houses and buildings so varied as to feast the eye with archæological studies—with contrasts between old and new, and new imitating old.

The Boulevards de la Madeleine, des Capucines, and des Italiens, have all the luxuriousness and pretention of the *parvenus* of finance. The Boulevards Montmartre and Poissonnière retain the air of substantial *bourgeoisie*. The great arches of the Porte St. Denis and St. Martin mark the admixture of the *petite bourgeoisie* and turbulent working-classes. We then get into the quarter of the people's theatres, where, side by side, or very nearly so, stand those modern substitutes of the Mediæval temples, in whose performances may be read the taste, aye, and sources of the perversion of the taste of a people intensely devoted to amusement. As usual, where the audiences are composed of the

less refined, the performances are either extravagant tragedy, or broad humour, or pantomime. The Parisians are not stained with the vice of drunkenness; but what scalding drink of gin or whisky can be more maddening and demoralizing than the sombre licentiousness of the Porte St. Martin, Gaîté, Ambigu, or Historique. But our business is now with externals. These theatres diversify the promenade. Then there is a magnificent fountain and odorous flower-market; and wherever an old house has been pulled down, as, for instance, that tainted den opposite the Turkish Garden, from which Fieschi discharged on a royal procession his infernal machine, a new house springs up, carved all over with the fanciful tracery of the *renaissance.*

As there is always a reigning historical model, it is pleasant to see the classic stiffness affected at the Revolution give way to the models of Italian taste, introduced by François Premier at the revival, although it proved but a temporary revival, of arts and letters. Now it happened, unfortunately for the *Fête de la Concorde;* that the charming pictorial line of the Boulevards was abandoned on the pretext of the unusual heat prevailing, and a short cut was made by the Assembly to the Champ de Mars. There was reason to suspect that some graver motive suggested the alteration; a plot was

said to have been discovered, the object of which was to seize some forty members of the Assembly, and hold them as hostages for the delivery of the prisoners at Vincennes. In aid of this plot, fire was to have been set to several theatres. Our task is pleasanter than to have to record a scene of wickedness; its close neighbourhood, however, to the gigantic trifling of the day, gives that trifling the sort of interest we would be disposed to take in a rope-dancer, who narrowly escaped a broken neck. Paris little thought she was dancing that day upon a cord which an effort had been made to cut half through.

The Assembly got safe to the Champs Elysées. The members of the Institute having, with the simplicity of literary men, put on their cocked hats, and oakleaf-embroidered coats, got well hooted for aristocrats. The few old soldiers of the Empire, that appeared here and there in costumes only known through pictures, fared better; and so long as the National Guards of town and country filled the Place de la Concorde and the Quays, the scene was animated enough. At the Champ de Mars the appearance was different. Viewed merely as a frame in which to place an exhibition, it is totally unfit. It is a naked, sandy square, so large as to merit the name of a plain. It looks as if it could not be filled. People seem like atoms spilled about;

and in this shadeless, unpictorial place, a heathenish sort of procession was arranged, that if seen in the Boulevards, or Champs Elysées, might have produced a certain sort of effect; but in the Champ de Mars, it was mean and paltry.

There was a great theatrical waggon, with corn-trees and plants, bedecked with gold-leaf and paint, drawn by sixteen plough-horses, and attended by four hundred choice damsels, singing to Nature, or Ceres, or some philosophical abstraction or heathen deity. The ladies were to have worn that sort of Olympian costume which the grand opera assigns, on we know not what authority, to creatures of the other world, too innocent to discover improprieties of dress. An *émeute* of mothers stopped the scandal, and the young ladies appeared in *salle de bal* costume. Specimens of native manufacture were borne as offerings to the gods: the best got up shrine was that of the tobacconists, the sale of cigars being a monopoly of the fair sex, which accounts for the tasteful accompaniments attending an incense more prized in modern times than frankincense or myrrh. Colossal statues in plaster, colossal tripods of pasteboard, with a thirty-feet-high, and made in proportion, figure of the Republic, bedecked this unroofed temple, of Heaven knows what sort of worship. And while this monster tomfoolery was going on, the National Guards

were anxiously on the alert, lest some *coup-de-main* should turn a dull farce into a deep tragedy.

The illuminations at night made up for the failure of the day. The Place de la Concorde was enclosed in a festoonry of variegated lamps, which, carried up each side of the Champs Elysées to Rond Point, with lustres suspended over head, converted that magnificent *allée* into a fairy hall, that realized the dream of an Arabian fancy; while the Arch of Triumph, looking like the Queen of the City, with its brilliant *bandeau* of lights, was beheld through a varying atmosphere of blue and red flame, or golden rain. The Champ de Mars was itself converted, as by a magic wand, into a fairy scene. In the morning the properties were removed, the stage was cleared for another representation; but whether for a terrible reality, on which it should be the turn of all Europe to gaze thrilled with horror and wonder, or for another raree-show to keep the mischievous children out of harm's way, afforded an anxious problem to many an aching head.

This being an English account, it would not be perfect without a statement of the cost, which, as presented to the National Assembly in the year's budget of blunders and expenditure, amounted to the round sum of 950,000 francs, or £38,000. *"Vive la Bagatelle!"*

The next day's sitting of the Assembly was occupied throughout with the discussion of various financial schemes for meeting the state of public distress, caused by the decline of credit and confidence, but which, as they were in no case adopted, having been civilly referred to Committees engaged in study, need not detain us from the important sitting of Tuesday, the 23rd of May, devoted to the consideration of Poland and Italy.

CHAPTER XIV.

GENERAL BARAGUAY D'HILLIERS—APPEARANCE OF CAVAIGNAC—THE MARQUIS DE LA ROCHEJACQUELIN—M. DE LAMARTINE'S SPEECH ON ITALY AND POLAND—ABSURD RESOLUTION.

THE sitting of Tuesday, the 23rd of May, opened with a skirmish which brought out a couple of those secondary, but respectable personages, who serve to the enlivenment as well as to the advance of the political drama, and afford an agreeable share of life and harmony to our moving canvass.

M. Bastide having acknowledged in suitable terms the handsome manner in which the great Trans-Atlantic Republic had recognized the new Government of France, General Baraguay d'Hilliers ascended the tribune for the purpose of laying down the command with which he had been invested. The General had been appointed Commander-in-Chief of the troops charged with the protection of

the Assembly; and he now found, that, by an order of the President, he was placed in a subordinate position to the Minister of War. Such position he would not accept. "What!" exclaimed M. de la Rochejacquelin, "an authority that had emanated from the Assembly itself, over-ruled!" He should like to know who it was that considered he had a right to nullify an act of the Assembly! General Cavaignac, the new Minister of War, explained that there had been no intention to nullify the command given by the Chamber; the object was to place all forces in the hands of the Minister of War, reserving to those who held special command their full rights. The explanation was not deemed satisfactory by the General whose interests were affected. The Assembly desired not to receive his resignation, and on his persisting in his resolution, passed him a vote of thanks.

This was the first appearance of General Cavaignac; and it was little suspected that so mild-looking a man—one giving evidence of the shyness of an officer who had passed his life in Algeria, and who appeared for the first time in a public assembly, charged with the high functions to which he was so suddenly elevated—it was little suspected how much strength of character, invincibility of will, and integrity of purpose, lay under a demeanour so modest. Nevertheless, this first act showed how well he un-

derstood the necessity of unity of command, and how resolved he was to act as he understood. General Baraguay d'Hilliers might have been some fifteen years the senior of the new Minister of War. His figure is that of a grenadier, and the loss of his left arm, on the disastrous field of Leipsic, gave an unfailing interest to his appearance.

The French have great respect for a military *manchot,* to whom many a hat is touched in his promenades. The General never forgot this slight, as he conceived it to be, and he became one of the most tenacious opponents of the Government. He was not eloquent, and so it was not at the tribune that he manifested the bitterness of his hostility; his work lay in another field. The combined sections of the old parliamentary parties, Conservatives, *Centre Gauche, Gauche,* and Legitimists, having formed a club, which, meeting in the Rue de Poictiers, soon rendered itself formidable, made the dissatisfied General their chairman. Within doors he showed considerable activity in carrying on communications with the allied army under his command, and towards supporters of the Government evinced rather crankiness than *hauteur.* In fact, the good General's talents were not of that high order which gives power to disdain. M. de la Rochejacquelin, who rushed in as at once the champion of the Assembly and of the General,

figures on all occasions of *etiquette*. He is the Marquis de la Rochejacquelin of the ex-Chamber of Deputies, and composed one of the five Legitimist members who made what was called the pilgrimage to Belgrave-square, on the occasion of the visit of the Duc de Bordeaux to London. An allusion to this visit having been made in the King's Speech, and the unhappy term *flétri* applied to the pilgrims, the Marquis, with his usual parliamentary heroism, in connexion with his quadruple allies, gave in his resignation, only to re-appear with a brow washed in the electoral urn from the Ministerial stigma put into the mouth of Royalty. The Noble Marquis entered the National Assembly without being able to throw off the fastidious grace of a courtier. He, the Legitimist, was one of the very few who obeyed the order to appear in a white waistcoat and white cravat; and he raised his hand for the Republic as he would have sworn fealty to the descendant of St. Louis.

There is no name, amongst all the glorious names of France, around which cluster so many charming associations as about that of the Bayard of La Vendée, fated to fall at the age of a Gaston de Foix. The most profoundly moving, the most inspiring of all that unique literary series, the Chronicles and Memoirs of the French, are the "Memoirs of Madame la Marquise de la Rochejacquelin." It was in

the west of France that loyalty glowed and blazed, after the Monarchy had set in blood; and if that region was comparatively spared the horrors which were visited on a Lyons or a Nantes, upon its border, it was because the Republic had committed its subjugation to a young chief, alive to heroic impressions—the gallant Hoche. The present Marquis, with all the courage of his kind, has yet the aspect of a "carpet knight." Fifty years, although they have carried locks from his crown, have yet spared the *ailes de pigeon.* His face is full and good-natured; his eye clear, but not intellectual. He is corpulent, but never did soldier mount the breach with more ardour than does that large, light-footed Marquis, when the cause to be defended is that of good manners, or the enemy to be cut down is the violater of parliamentary propriety. As the *arbiter elegantiarum* of the Assembly, the Marquis (we cannot throw him in amongst the ex's) has a very busy time. His indignation, from over-use, is becoming ineffective, and he has no other weapon. His is not the light, stinging, *railleur* vein; he is always King Cambyses. It is not the column of water the leviathan throws up through his dilated nostril—it is the close, gentle rain, that calms the sea. Many a great, but ineffective splash does our indignant Marquis make upon that storm-tossed Assembly; yet the Assembly could not do without

its Marquis, no more than the House of Commons without its Sibthorp, or the Court of Denmark without Polonius. He is a relic of the past, and serves the purpose of admonition, lest Republican tumult should descend into a Saturnalia.

We need not remind our readers of what the Egyptians hung up at their feasts, to sober them into propriety; nothing can be more unlike the Egyptian recipe for counteracting the wine of Cyprus than the portly presence of the Marquis de la Rochejacquelin. He stands a living proof that there may be cordiality, warmth and earnestness combined with elegance of manner, and propriety of speech.

The incident on which we have been tempted to dwell having been disposed of, M. d'Aragon renewed his interpellation regarding Italy, and M. Wolowski his interpellation regarding Poland, and was supported by M. Vavin, M. Sarrans, M. Guichard, and M. Napoleon Bonaparte, in speeches of a more or less warlike complexion; the last was particularly so.

M. de Lamartine at length took the tribune. His speech was based upon the celebrated diplomatic circular which, shortly after the revolution, he had addressed to the representatives of France at foreign Courts, and of which his reply to the interpellations of the day, was in fact an amplified para-

phrase. In that circular, it was laid down that while France would not shrink from war, if declared by other powers, yet she would not declare war against any; that while she negociated in favour of nationalities, she yet kept her hand on her sword; and that although she declared the Treaties of 1815 abrogated, she would yet trust to reason and the power of patient negociation for a restitution of rights; her military power being at the same time kept to such a height, as to show that it would not be safe, to oblige a recurrence to the *ultima ratio*. The motives assigned by M. de Lamartine, for preferring negociation to war, were founded chiefly on the suspicion that might be excited on the part of those very "oppressed nationalities," whom it was their disinterested object to relieve. The nations of Europe had not forgotten the inflictions caused by the invasion of the Empire, and the selfish way in which so many fine promises were perverted to the aggrandizement of one power. Republican France was now paying the penalty of the Empire, in the exhibition of a distrust which she no longer merited. Nor was this a theoretical surmise, for since that circular had been addressed, several expeditions had been got up by foreigners, in which Frenchmen had mingled; one had been directed against Belgium, another against Savoy, and many parts of the frontier of Germany had been violated; the

consequence of all which, was an exhibition of irritation among the people of these different countries, sufficient to warn France of the misapprehension to which imprudent or premature intervention might give rise.

With regard to Italy, he argued that in consequence of the change of policy that had taken place upon the fall of the Monarchy, that country was by an internal movement—in which the Pope, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, the Dukes of Parma, Plaisance and Modena shared, and of which the King of Piedmont had become the arm—almost delivered from the yoke of Austria. How far the orator was from foreseeing the defeat of Charles Albert, and the flight of the Pope! The then actual position of things in Italy, the declaration of Charles Albert that Italy was able to free herself, the refusal of the Italian powers to invite French aid, all this happily enabled M. de Lamartine to turn from the difficulties of the Italian Peninsula, to the question of Poland. This Polish question, he acknowledged, to present one of the main difficulties of French policy. Turning to the Instructions addressed to French agents at the Northern Courts, he quoted the spirited injunctions that had been given to them—to state frankly to the Russian, the Prussian, and the Austrian Governments: "We desire peace with you, we will even

seek your alliance on conditions equitable for all, and beneficial for intermediate nations; but the first condition for the solidity of this peace, and for rendering intimate our alliance, is that usurped and oppressed Poland, without proper nationality, without civil or religious independence, should not rise between ourselves and you." At that price, he said, was the peace of the world. He then proceeded to show that the views of France, regarding the restitution of Poland, had been responded to, particularly by the King of Prussia, who had consented to the administrative independence of Posen; and if those beneficent intentions had not been already carried out, it was owing to an outbreak of local hatreds between families, of hostile races, different languages and different nationalities, such as had ever formed the plague of Poland, and had ever proved fatal to the heroism of that generous people.

Next with regard to Cracow and Austrian Poland, he had only to point to the then threatened state of decomposition into which the Austrian Empire was falling, and which would, as a matter of course, lead to the emancipation of her Polish provinces; and he dwelt particularly on the fraternal feelings of the Bohemians, who were ready to rise in vindication of their own nationality, and to aid the Poles in a similar attempt.

Here again, how far was the orator from foreseeing Windischgrätz, and the removal of the Austrian Diet to a Bohemian town! Reviewing the general state of things, as they appeared to the Provisional Government, he asked, if they ought to have raised by a premature declaration of war, the susceptibilities of all Continental nations, which would have had for effect, the re-constitution of a coalition against France. Suppose, he said, that they had launched an army of 120,000 men across Germany, what would they not have had to encounter? They would have found 500,000 Germans on each flank, before they could have reached Poland; and when there, they would have found 250,000 Russians ready to meet them, they having previously annihilated Poland herself.

Let us stop! have we not in this drowning argument of M. de Lamartine, the celebrated twenty-first final reason of the Governor of Tilbury Fort, for not having fired a salute in honour of Queen Elizabeth, who having enumerated his twenty difficulties, came to the last, that he had no powder. M. de Lamartine might have spared a vast deal of eloquent circumlocution, by coming at once to the point, and stating, that they did not march to Poland, because they could not. Had he done so, of what an absurd inconsequence might he not have spared himself the exhibition! It would not be

easy to do justice to so eloquent a speaker, through a meagre outline; but there are two parts of the speech which we give faithfully, the one in which he puts a quasi-declaration of war into the mouths of French Republicans against the Northern Courts, on account of Poland; and the other, in which he makes that declaration so much mere mouthing and imbecile impertinence, by a statistical demonstration of the impossibility in which France found herself to undertake a crusade for Poland's liberation.

M. de Lamartine fancied that the same principle of Government, which he had found so successful at home, could be applied to foreign diplomacy; and that he could cajole, convince, or frighten with eloquent "pellets of the brain," as he had soothed and ruled from the Revolution to the meeting of the Assembly by words. His was to have been the moral agitation of O'Connell, with a mystic reference to physical force. Foreign powers would have blown aside the painted cloud, and numbered the battalions. Young France would have cheered the music, but sharpened her sword. The only one deceived would be the Magician himself. He who like the man in the Eastern tale, had let escape the imprisoned smoke, would have found himself in the presence of a giant.

M. de Lamartine exerted himself in an extraor-

dinary degree on this day, as if he had before him an unwilling audience, whom it required all his powers to convince. It was no such thing. The invasion of the previous Monday week, in the name of Poland, had settled the Polish question. It had done more, it turned attention away from foreign politics. The danger lay at home—the enemy was within the gates. The Republic could not undertake a crusade, except on the condition of a surrender of society to the *bonnet-rouge*. The speech was valuable as affording a covering for retreat under a brilliant fire. The discussion ended in the adoption of a resolution, inviting the Government to take as its rule of conduct: "Fraternal compact with Germany; re-constitution of Poland, free and independent; the enfranchisement of Italy."

This was a confused resolution. France had pledged herself, or allowed herself to be pledged in general terms, to answer the invitation of any struggling nationality to come to its assistance. In making this pledge, Poland and Italy were particularly understood. As regards Poland, we find the fulfilment of the pledge was impossible, because Germany lay in the way, and with Germany, France was seeking a fraternal compact. Italy, however, had no interposing barrier; she was approachable by sea and by land, and so there was nothing to prevent an Italian invitation being accepted. Not

so fast! From what yoke was Italy to be enfranchised? Why from that of Austria; but Austria is a great German power; her integrity, necessary to German strength, is bound up with German sentiment, and with Germany France seeks fraternal compact. The resolution was therefore a mystification and a juggle.

CHAPTER XV.

DECREE BANISHING THE FAMILY OF LOUIS-PHILIPPE—JEALOUSY SHOWN TOWARDS THE BONAPARTES—AGITATION IN THE NATIONAL ATELIERS—ATTEMPTS TO CURE GROWING ABUSES—HOW RECEIVED—DISAPPEARANCE OF EMILE THOMAS, CHIEF DIRECTOR OF THE ATELIERS—APPLICATION TO PROSECUTE LOUIS BLANC.

THE sitting of Wednesday, the 24th of May, was rendered remarkable by the communication of a letter from the Duc d'Aumale and the Prince de Joinville, protesting against the intended project of excluding the family of Louis-Philippe for ever from the soil of France. The Duc d'Aumale had been Governor-General of Algeria, at the time when the Revolution was accomplished. The Prince de Joinville was on a visit with his brother, having, as it appeared afterwards, left the Tuileries in sorrow and disgust, on account of the policy he

was obliged to witness, without being able to restrain, while he clearly foresaw its fatal termination.

The Duc d'Aumale, upon the first summons from the Republican Minister of War, laid down his authority without a murmur; his more fiery brother manifested equal prudence; and they pleaded as of right, their conduct on this occasion, against the hard banishment about to be decreed against them. The protest proved of no avail.

On the day next but one following, the law banishing for ever the family of Louis-Philippe was brought forward and discussed. The feebleness of the opposition to it may be judged from the division, which gave 631 for the decree, and 63 against it. The law was so conceived, that it pleaded its own cause with terrible laconic retaliation. It ran thus: "The territory of France and her Colonies, interdicted for ever to the elder branch of the Bourbons, by the law of the 10th of April, 1832, is equally interdicted to Louis-Philippe and his family." It was perhaps felt by those whose sympathies were with the Ex-King and his family, that it was not worth their while to have their profession of Republicanism called in question by an opposition that would have done no good. They well knew, moreover, that if the time should come for a restoration of either branch, the decree of the

Assembly would prove but a barrier of straw. Still there was something startling in the almost unanimity with which a sentence was passed, that sounds the most awful next to that of death.

An incident occurred in this sitting, which by the light of subsequent events, possesses a reflective interest. An allusion was made to the Bonaparte family, by one of the ultra-democratic party, of a threatening kind—inasmuch as by insinuating that they were in that Assembly provisionally or by sufferance, a hint was to be inferred, that their continuance would depend on good behaviour. Pierre and Napoleon Bonaparte, who stood among a group collected on the floor, at the right of the chair, manifested great excitement, particularly the former; but as he has not the free elocution of his cousin, the latter rushed to the tribune, and asserted his rights of citizenship, he being there returned by universal suffrage. This was the first manifestation of the disagreeable effect produced on the Republicans by the presence of the Bonapartes, of whose name they had an instinctive apprehension, which subsequent events proved to have been somewhat well-founded.

Saturday, the 27th of May, was a day of considerable agitation in Paris. The Assembly was surrounded by troops, similar precautions were taken for the protection of the Hôtel-de-Ville, the

Prefecture of Police, and other public establishments. The cause of this agitation was some disturbances that had broken out in the national *ateliers,* the prodigious development of which had begun to excite serious uneasiness. The Frankenstein of the Revolution had begun to move. The situation was just this. The leaders of the Revolution of February, as much unprepared for the Republic as any other party, were obliged by the Socialists, and indeed by the want of a good cry, to base the Republic upon the working classes. A vision of wealth, ease, and social and political importance, had suddenly opened upon the eyes of the operatives. Their reason became disturbed, and their energies directed from their daily avocations, turned into the vortex of revolutionary agitation. The workmen were the masters of the city, awaiting to become the trustees of the State. All who had any thing to lose and could fly—fled. Employment shrank away, and even if employment had been abundant, steady application became impossible. How could men whose passions had been thrown into fever, and whose imaginations had been kindled—how could they work? The State, which had undertaken to make these men "Kings who should ride in coaches,"* was obliged to find

* The words of Louis Blanc.

them bread. The transition from toil to sovereignty, was to be beggary. The beggary was to be disguised under unprofitable toil, and dignified by military organization. The men rallied, each company under its banner, and followed their officers. They worked as much as they pleased; when they did not work, read cheap publications of the most subversive character, finished the day with rifle practice, and clubbed their money to go home in coaches.

The workmen took the State at its word, and lived royally. The Civil List, however, became rather burthensome; the State was becoming every day less able to pay; the army was increasing, swelled by habitual beggars, by the country labourers, who deserted their work and their fields for the spoil, which was to fall some fine day to the share of the *proletaires*, and by all those whom a perishing commerce threw on alms. The terrible outbreak that occurred in June, took no one by surprize, for the question of insurrection was one of time. When would that army which hung like thunder clouds over the beleaguered city, burst in upon it? When would those irritated, excited, and demoralized workmen rush upon their prey, and having gloated on all the available wealth of the capital, endeavour to accomplish for themselves the Social and Democratic Republic that had been

promised? Such questions occupied the anxious attention of all who knew what was passing. The panic which appeared to-day was caused by a proclamation of the Minister of Public Works, that there should be a rigid review of the national *ateliers*, for the purpose of diminishing the numbers, by weeding away those who had no claim to support from the State, by checking the frauds that were committed by persons practising personation, and by forcing those who remained to execute task-work. This proclamation was just and necessary; and it dissipated the illusion under which the workmen had so long been allowed to labour. They were no longer lords and masters—they were receivers of charity. They were a burthen to the State, a source of confusion and ruin.

The agitation continued throughout Sunday and Monday, and many thought that the struggle had come at last. While this fermentation was going on, the Assembly was occupied with discussing propositions and reports relating to these national *ateliers*. The vices of the institution were unsparingly exposed, particularly by M. Léon Faucher and M. de Falloux; still no measure could be taken that would not look harsh and offensive to the poor deluded objects of suspicion. The Clubs, that were speculating on the demoralization and discontent of

the national *ateliers*, stirred up the flame—gathered every strong speech made in the Assembly, every hard word, and barbed and poisoned them. While the decree regarding the purification of the *ateliers*, by the removal of cheats and idlers, was producing its effect, a thrill of astonishment was caused by the disappearance of the Chief of the *Ateliers*. M. Emile Thomas, a young engineer of talent, had first suggested the plan of the *Ateliers Nationaux* to the Minister of Public Works; and when the plan was approved of, the direction was bestowed upon him. A charming villa, which had been the private property of Louis-Philippe, situated in a beautiful park, called Monceau, in the faubourg of that name, was assigned to the young Director, and became the head-quarters of the institution. If report speak truth, the villa was restored to the festivities practised under the Regency that preceded and prepared the first great Revolution. The example set to the rank and file of the national *ateliers* was by no means one of self-denial; while waiting the coming *millenium* of the *République Démocratique et Sociale*. Luxury ran riot at Monceau, while beggary trundled its wheelbarrow on the Champ de Mars. M. Thomas was taken without ceremony by the Republican Government, put into a coach, and carried off to Bordeaux, after the fashion in which a

Duc d'Enghien would have been seized by a Napoleon. The romance was heightened by a letter written with a pencil to Madame Thomas, the mother of the captive, who committed it to the winds and the high road, as a sinking mariner commits the secret of his fate to a bottle cast into the sea; and, strange to say, the letter arrived. Such being the state of things, it became impossible for the National Assembly to avoid feeling its share of the agitation which prevailed so generally without.

On Monday, the 29th of May, M. Taschereau brought the subject before the Assembly. The Minister of Public Works gave an explanation, which showed there was something behind the curtain, of which it might be as well to avoid the exposure. He declared that he never could obtain proper returns of the whole of the *ateliers;* that his remonstrances against the exorbitant increase of numbers produced no effect. He assured the Assembly that Thomas was in constant apprehension of assassination, or affected to be so; that he gave in his resignation voluntarily; and that it was altogether in the interest of his personal safety that he was so suddenly, but altogether with his own consent, sent off to Bordeaux. Whatever mystery was enveloped in the strange circumstance, one point was clear,

that the national *ateliers* formed a serious danger for the commonwealth.

The remaining portion of this day was passed in regulating the relation that ought to subsist between the Assembly and the Executive power. We have already had to notice the feebleness of the Ministry that had been chosen by the Executive. The ex-Ministers, now become Supreme Directors, had, as before described, put their secretaries in their places—these secretaries, plain plodding men, without oratorical powers. It was hoped, however, that their want of elocution would be supplied, on all necessary occasions, by Lamartine or Ledru-Rollin, Garnier Pagès or Marie. But no!—the Directory was now in the place of the Monarchy. It had ambassadors to receive, and all the dignity of supreme surveillance weighed upon its god-like responsibility. The Directory prayed accordingly to be excused from taking part in debates, and its prayer was granted. The Ministers, then, were real independent Ministers, although of the poorest possible kind.

The following day, the 30th, was occupied with the same topics. A law for regulating the national *ateliers*, the chief feature of which was the imposition of task-work, was discussed; and, after exposures of the demoralization caused by these esta-

blishments, passed. It was shown, that, owing to some design not then quite apparent, however it might have been suspected, the men of the national *ateliers* exercised a complete system of tyranny over the well-disposed workmen, who were turned out of factories in which they were willingly doing their duty, and obliged to swell the mass of idleness by which the State was encumbered. Orders in several branches of trade had to be renounced, owing to want of hands, and there was an utter disorganization of the working classes."

The salient point of the sitting of the 31st was a written application, by the law officers of the Republic, for leave to prosecute Louis Blanc for the part attributed to him in the affair of the 15th of May. The charge against him was, that he had on that day, by his speeches particularly, been implicated in the invasion and oppression of the Assembly. It had been proved that he had said, "I congratulate you on having recognized the right of bearing your own petition to the Chamber—a right that henceforward remains incontestable." Other circumstances, confirmatory of the accusation, were stated to have taken place, but not specified in the Act of Accusation. M. Louis Blanc defended himself; by offering a flat contradiction to the expressions attributed to him. The witnesses, mem-

bers of the Assembly, re-asserted the expressions; and a scene of tumult was provoked by the scandal of mutually-attributed falsehood, which was put an end to by the application being referred to a Committee, to inquire into and report thereupon.

CHAPTER XVI.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LOUIS BLANC—ILL-WILL TOWARDS THE BONAPARTES—THE CROSS OF THE LEGION OF HONOUR—PROSECUTION OF LOUIS BLANC REFUSED—SPLIT BETWEEN CREMIEUX AND FAVRE.

THE Assembly did not meet, out of respect for Ascension Thursday, one of the few holidays which the French strictly observe by a cessation from all business and an attention to religious duties; both which marks of respect are but indifferently paid to the Sabbath.

On Friday, the 2nd of June, the report on M. Louis Blanc's case was brought up by M. Favre. After an elaborate preliminary, in which it was laid down that scrupulous care had been taken that the application for leave to prosecute was not conceived in a spirit of reaction or personal malice, but was founded on a pure love of justice; and after a dose

of cruel compliments to the accused, delivered in the most insidious tone, the conclusion was come to, that the Assembly ought not to interpose a barrier of privilege against the claims of justice. All eyes were turned to Louis Blanc, and invitations to speak arose from all sides; which he answered by a sign that he would say a few words from his place; but the calls to ascend the tribune became so vehement, that he complied. He looked haggard with agitation, and only uttered a few phrases, declaring that he would not say a word in his own vindication; then, warning the Assembly that they had entered on a disastrous course, left the tribune, to the disappointment of those who had reckoned upon that great parliamentary luxury, an impassioned personal debate.

This incident was not to end with injury confined to Louis Blanc; but we must interrupt the unity of narration, for the purpose of noting the proceedings that occupied the rest of the day. They were composed of three distinct categories—a discussion relating to the Bonaparte family, a financial bill between M. Billault and M. Duclerc, and a scene about the cross of the legion of honour.

The Bonaparte family were excluded from France by a distinct law which had not been abrogated. Now there can be no doubt, seeing the suspicious excitement and jealousy that broke out whenever

the name of this family was introduced, that had the Revolutionists not been swept unexpectedly into their tumultuous career before they had time to take note of the future, they would have guarded the Republic against the pretensions of the successors of Napoleon. As it was, the attention of the Republican party was concentrated upon Louis-Napoleon alone, on account of the two attempts that, as heir to the Emperor, he had made on the Crown of France.

Under cover of this pre-occupation, two cousins of the Prince had been allowed to take their seats unquestioned in the National Assembly, as well as the son of Murat. Possession has been truly said to be nine points of the law. They were there, and although men may be induced to maintain a barrier already existing, yet expulsion from a place entered and secured, is an ungracious act from which people revolt. If this be true with regard to persons of ordinary interest, how much more powerful must the feeling have been with reference to the illustrious name of Bonaparte, rendered tender by defeat, dethronement, and exile. There were few, indeed, who could have brought themselves to put their hands on the shoulder of Jerome's son, the living image of the Emperor, and turn him out of a society of Frenchmen.

The Minister of Justice thought to put a good face on the matter, and to bring the House to the adoption of a proposition, tagged to a piece of false sentiment, that the law excluding the Bonaparte family being a Monarchical Act, had fallen with the Monarchy. It would not do. He tried a second "dodge," proposing that the law had been virtually abrogated by the admission of three members of the Bonaparte family. That would not do either. The Assembly with the true instincts towards plain truth which animate aggregate masses of men, even senators, preferred the more straightforward abrogation of the law by a direct declaration to that effect.

We should like to say a few words touching M. Billault, but we have him in view for another day, and so skip from the Bonaparte family to the Cross of the Legion of Honour. Citizen Rey proposed that the effigy of Napoleon should be restored to the Cross—a reasonable proposition if the institution of the Legion of Honour was to be continued at all—for of all the anachronisms invented by the Restoration, that of attaching the Legion of Honour to the memory of Henry IV. was the most absurd—more absurd even than the quiet assumption of the non-existence of the Empire, and of victories gained by General Bonaparte, Commander-in-Chief of the King's armies — the

King being Louis XVIII., restored by the victories of foreign bayonets over this General Bonaparte himself. The staunch Republicans desired to see the Cross dispensed with altogether, because it had, under the Monarchy, formed the small-change of corruption, and been deprived of its value by the ridiculous profusion with which it was bestowed on Treasury clerks, and other wretchedly remunerated servants of the Crown.

The revival of the image of Napoleon in a way so striking to the imagination was also apprehended. The old soldiers in the Assembly defended the Cross, and when Clément Thomas, in his rough stentorian voice, described it as a *hochet de la vanité*, he not only excited a storm, which our readers have discovered by this time was never very difficult, but exposed himself to positive danger, for had he not explained away his words, there was more than one whiskered *décoré*, ready to avenge the stigma. This matter may be disposed of here, by stating that some months afterwards, General Cavaignac, while at the head of the Government, ordered the effigy of Napoleon to be reinstated on the Cross of the Legion of Honour.

The next day, Saturday, the 14th of June, the report on M. Louis Blanc's case was again brought forward, and the conclusion of the report of the Committee, recommending an authorisation by the

Assembly of the demand made by the law officers for leave to prosecute, warmly contested by the friends of the inculpated gentleman. Upon the question being put to the vote, to the surprise of every one, M. Crémieux, the Minister of Justice, who had sanctioned the application, and without whose sanction the proceeding could not have been taken, rose and voted with the opposition, and leave was refused by a small majority. As a consequence of this vote, the law officers sent in their resignation.

On the next meeting of the Assembly, M. Jules Favre showed that his anger had been raised to white heat. What! he the associate of Ledru-Rollin, the most compromised in all the dictatorial and illegal proceedings of the Provisional Government—he, the friend of Louis Blanc, had been gently urged into the ungracious position of his accuser, in the belief that his colleagues, for he was Under-secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, were identified with himself, and that he was interpreting the will of the Government, yet there he stood reproved in the presence of the whole Assembly, by the Minister of Justice voting against him! It was too much, and he resigned; but before he did so, he gave M. Crémieux a mortal stab. He accused the Minister of Justice and Religion of a violation of his solemn engagement with respect

to himself and the law officers of the Republic, who in turn equally charged the Minister with a breach of his word; and as the Assembly could not resist such testimony, M. Crémieux felt obliged, in shame and confusion, to resign office. A less dignified functionary never filled a post pre-eminently demanding the possession of those high moral qualities that give dignity to the least favoured.

The sitting of Tuesday, the 6th of June, was occupied with a scrambling discussion relating to the different financial projects of the Government affecting the Savings' Banks, Treasury Bonds, Railways, &c., regarding which much anxiety and irritation were felt in and out of doors, for the doctrines held by the Government were considered to be of the subversively revolutionary kind. The proper time to refer to one of these measures more particularly, will be when they came in a definite shape before the House.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CLUBS OUT OF DOORS—A RAZZIA—LAW AGAINST ATTROUPEMENTS—ELECTIONS FOR VACANT SEATS—CURIOUS CONTRASTS SHOWN BY THE RETURNS—DEFEAT OF THE REPUBLICANS—RETURNS OF CONSERVATIVES, BONAPARTISTS, AND COMMUNISTS—THE ATTROUPEMENTS CONTINUE — ALARM CAUSED BY THE POPULARITY OF LOUIS NAPOLEON—ANIMATED DEBATE—M. DUPRAT—M. BABAUD-LARIBIERE—NEW REPUBLICAN LITERATURE—GENERAL BEDEAU—A BONAPARTIST PLOT—A DECREE AGAINST LOUIS NAPOLEON STOPPED BY GENERAL LAVALET.

THE agitation and alarm caused by the insubordination of national *ateliers*, by the total suspension of all commerce, by the demoralization of the whole working population and the activity of the Clubs, began about this time to assume a most menacing form. Ever since the Revolution of February, the city had been converted into a vast Club, or *causeries* of Clubs. The Boulevards, Palais Royal,

Gardens of the Tuileries, and corners of streets and thoroughfares, presented groups of talkers and listeners. A placard, or any object that caused one or two persons to stop, would serve as the nucleus for a group. In consequence of the laxity of the police, all sorts of wares might be seen spread out in what used to be the haunts of fashion, and tended, with other causes, to impede the general circulation.

Such congregated masses of filth and idleness contrasted miserably with the external brilliancy of the once rich and gay city. It was as if by a convulsion of Nature a fair navigable stream had been suddenly filled and choked up with ruins, through which the waters roared more vehemently than before; but there was an end to the pleasant and useful interchange that gave to life the no less sweet than profitable commerce which lived upon it.

For a while this peripatetic indulgence in the delights of street democracy had to be tolerated; but about the period at which we have now arrived, the nuisance assumed a most dangerous and perplexing form. The masses of people who thus congregated in the sweet summer evenings on the Boulevards, unable to remain quiet at their homes, too many of which only served to remind the inmates of their destitution, were calculated

to inspire some serious reflections. The chief haunt of the politicians in blouses used to be the Porte St. Denis and the Boulevards, and the adjacent streets became at night impassable. Several attempts had been made to clear the thoroughfares by charges of National Guards, Mobile Guards and police, but with only temporary effect. In order to frighten well-disposed people away, a razzia was made one night, and every person on whom hands could be laid was arrested.

At length the Government resolved upon having recourse to measures of coercion, and on Wednesday the 7th of June, a law was presented of a very stringent character, affecting *attroupements*. As the Minister of Justice, and the law officers of the Republic had resigned, owing to causes already explained, it devolved on M. Marie, one of the Executive Commission, to conduct the bill through the Assembly. He did his duty in the most manly and unflinching manner, and notwithstanding the strenuous opposition of the Ultra-Republicans, the law for the suppression of *attroupements* was passed by an immense majority. M. Lamartine and M. Ledru-Rollin refrained from giving the sanction of their presence to this vigorous act of their colleague, and the one and the other suffered alike in the estimation of the friends of order. Public feeling happened to be put to the test at this time,

by several elections having taken place, chiefly owing to double returns on the occasion of the general election.

For Paris there had been no fewer than eleven vacancies, and the manner in which they were filled up, curiously exemplified the disorganization and confusion of parties. M. Caussidière, who had resigned his seat along with the Prefecture, came in at the head of the list, by a coalition of parties supporting him, because of their dislike to the Government. The others were Moreau, Goudchaux, Pierre Leroux, the Communist; General Changarnier, Thiers, Proudhon, Communist; Lagrange, Communist; Victor Hugo, Boissel, and Louis Napoleon Bonaparte. For Rouen, Thiers was returned with Charles Dupin, Ex-Peer of France. He was also returned for his own department, Bouches-du-Rhône. Louis Bonaparte was nominated for five different places. These nominations for Paris were clear in one respect; they shewed that the Moderate Republican party had lost ground. The *National* acknowledged its defeat. The constituency was separated into three parts—the Monarchists, the Bonapartists, a hitherto unsuspected party, and the Communists; nor could there be a doubt, that the return of three such men as Pierre Leroux, Proudhon, and Lagrange, greatly encouraged and stimulated the partisans of the Social

and Democratic Republic, now on the eve of bringing their forces to the test of a trial at arms. The agitation that prevailed in the city was not in the least discouraged by the passing of this measure. The *attroupements* continued. The printed proclamation of the law was torn down, and trampled on with contumely. The house of M. Thiers was assailed by the mob.

The Assembly continued to sit and discuss a variety of topics, connected generally with financial projects and economical schemes, enough to show where lay the evils, but without sufficient force to apply the necessary remedies.

While the Assembly seemed to be involved in an entangled maze of minor propositions, in presence of a society that required some great overmastering example of courage and self-reliance, in order to rally all who yet felt well, and who would, under proper leaders, take their stand on the side of order—the Executive Commission of Government, which ought to have afforded a proper impetus to the parliament, was itself distracted, and that not so much by the disorganization of the working classes, as by the ominous rising of the star of Napoleon through the menacing chaos.

The return of Louis Napoleon for the city, and at the same time for several departments, showed that a moment of hesitation, at least, had arrived,

which if not corrected, would speedily take a decided colour in a reactionary sense against the Republic. The Executive Commission resolved, therefore, to bring in a decree for the expulsion of this member of the Bonaparte family, from the throne of France, or rather that he should be excepted from the benefit of the repeal of that law, by which the excluded family was allowed to return. The ground of the exclusion was to be the attempts that he had made at Strasbourg and Boulogne, in the name of the *Senatus Consulte* of the Year XIII. to have himself made Emperor with Republican Institutions. He was held, therefore, by the Executive Commission of Government, to come within the category of Pretenders.

The time chosen for the presentation of this law, was coincident with a demand for a vote of confidence, raised upon an application for a grant of 100,000 francs a month, partly for necessary expenditure, and partly for secret service. The Government had felt, that it was losing ground in the opinion of the Assembly, as well as out of doors. The presence of Ledru-Rollin at the supreme direction, and of such men as Flocon and Recurt in the ministry, with the Clubs openly at work, a licentious press, the unlimited mob agitation of the streets, and the occasional expressions from Ministers themselves, at once grovelling before the new

power of demagogueism, and alarming to men of property, whose rights were treated with that kind of *sans façon*, that implied sympathy with the prejudices against capitalists raised by the Socialists and Communists. M. de Lamartine took upon himself the task of entering into a sort of family explanation with the Assembly; but the history of the debate and of the day—of the incidents within, and the events without—having formed one of those dramatic combinations, so curiously characteristic of the march of the Revolution, that we must endeavour to bring the scene before our readers.

Napoleon Bonaparte, at the opening of the proceedings, claimed attention, for the purpose of disclaiming the agitation that had been excited in the name of his cousin, and of answering for the loyalty, not only of his intentions, but of those of all the Bonaparte family, with respect to the Republic: he was supported by Pierre Bonaparte, who echoed the sentiments expressed by Napoleon. After a few ominous hints from M. Flocon about measures taken for the security of the Republic, M. Pascal Duprat opened the serious business of the day by presenting the report of the Committee, to whom, according to usage, had been referred the consideration of the demand for 100,000 francs a month, in which was involved the vote of confidence.

This M. Duprat was a gentleman who came forward in the early meetings of the Assembly, and seemed destined to be one of the young promising school of statesmen, who were to supersede the worn out veterans of the parliament; but like the stars of Béranger, he appeared only that he might *file, file, et disparaît*. He was one of those half-socialist, half-mystic writers, who would have been of the school of Lamartine, had Lamartine been able to found a school. He was of a tall, gentlemanly appearance, well suited to follow in the train of so *distingué* a philosopher. On M. Duprat devolved the occasional task of provoking explanations arranged before-hand behind the curtain; and no man could perform the part better of an impartial friend, who had suspended his judgment, but ready, though his heart-strings should be torn, to join in a vote of condemnation, should such be deserved. A young man who can throw back his clustering locks, with well-affected resolution, and keep his countenance, is an invaluable ministerial ally, a most graceful master of ceremonies to lead in the blushing delinquent, ready to plead innocence, and finish with a pirouette before an enraptured auditory.

M. Duprat led in M. de Lamartine, and so well, that he was soon afterwards raised from a socialist, or half-socialist reviewer—for all the Lamartineites

delighted in demi-tints—to be ambassador extraordinary to Vienna, whither he never went. It was into more obscure quarters, that this star did *file, file et disparaît*. The report of course was favourable to ministers. It was, nevertheless, disputed by M. Paul Sevaistre, whose physiognomy is lost to memory. He accused the Clubs of being the true source of present evils, and attacked the Government for its weak indulgence of these *foci* of agitation. The street mobs were but symptoms of the evil, but the evil itself lay in these Clubs.

If we forget the countenance of M. Sevaistre, we can well call to mind that of Babaud-Laribière, one of the most zealous defenders of the Republican Executive. He is a small, neat, pretty man, with an enormous beard, to which he bears a lover's devotion. No pet cat was ever treated with more affectionate tenderness; all the perfumes of Arabia nestled like spirits of the air about it. Such a beard *promenaded*, as the French idiom has it, through a field of nightingales, might tempt them from the bosoms of roses. His strength lay in his hair; for he had the city-shuffling, rather than the round, rolling, oriental gait; and except the beard and head, but little more could be seen above the tribune. As a writer of *feuilletons*, Babaud was sentimental, and introduced a new line, for the purpose of doing away prejudices about *més-*

alliance. In his soft, semi-columns at the foot of the newspaper, Counts abandoned the prejudices that had clouded the misunderstood perfection of the *blanchisseuse*; and if the coronet was for ever dashed from the brow of high-born beauty, the superior *grisette*—steeped to her pretty little bonnet in philosophy—would not stoop to pick it up. At the tribune, Babaud was a Boanerges—a son of thunder. He blamed the Government for its longanimity. It had left the enemies of the Republic in the enjoyment of situations bestowed by the Monarchy, and had neglected those who had sacrificed all in its service—"even their honour." There was an escapade!—A sacrifice of honour! What a letting out of the cat! But we must not be vulgar in the presence of Babaud-Laribière.

We pass by another speaker to come to General Bedeau. The Citizen-General who now appeared at the tribune, is one of the most distinguished of that young school of Generals, brought into light by the long military occupation of Algeria. His characteristic is said to be administrative power. His head is large and massive, his eye deep-sunk and shrewd, and his voice of that clear, sharp character, that gives the impression of keenness. Yet this able, active General, who was to fall severely, although not mortally wounded, in defending the cause of order, within a few days, had

shared the fatal fatuity with which all seemed to have been seized in February. He allowed, because his orders bewildered him from their contradictory character, the mob to rush across the bridge leading to the Chamber, and to turn out the Deputies. His present speech could hardly be more unfortunate for his interests, for he not only rose to make a declaration of Republican faith, but to throw ridicule on the pretenders who would parody the Emperor, and to answer for the fidelity of the army, should its services be required. His adhesion to the Report was not, however, unqualified. He called for a practical performance of the promises which had been made for the repulsion of the fomenters of anarchy, and reserved the grant of his support until such promises were carried out.

So direct a challenge as this, gave the signal to M. de Lamartine that the moment had arrived for him to make his promised speech. He began by stating, that what was wanting at the present moment, was light upon the questions that were engaging public attention. Was it true, he asked, that the Government was divided, and leading different ways? No! It was true, he acknowledged, that when the Provisional Government was suddenly formed, and in a manner and under circumstances so extraordinary, persons of diffe-

rent views were necessarily thrown together; but as soon as an intermediate government was installed, there was no longer dissentiment. If there was, they would feel it to be their duty, as honourable men, to bring their differences before the Assembly. While he admitted that dissensions prevailed among the Provisional Government, he yet pronounced the warmest eulogies on all its members, whom he held up as inevitably exposed to calumnies from the nature of their position, for which they could only hope to be recompensed by the impartial judgment of posterity. He then drew a large and brilliant picture of the acts that had been accomplished, showing how, out of disorder, had been recomposed the political, administrative, material, financial, diplomatic, and military forces of the country.

Exhausted by the effort he had made, the orator claimed permission to repose. While he was seated, with Republican simplicity, on the steps of the tribune, and chatting unceremoniously with his friends, an incident occurred without, which was calculated, as had now become usual, to operate upon proceedings within.

From the time of the invasion of the Chamber, on the 15th of May, the military defence of the Chamber had become a matter of serious preoccupation. At all times, there was a strong force in the immediate neighbourhood, but in addition to

this, precautions would be had recourse to according as the reports of the police indicated more or less danger. At times, the bridge leading to the Chamber would be barred to passengers. At other times, not merely the bridge, but the Place de la Concorde itself, would be closed. Occasionally, some pieces of artillery would be pointed in the faces of imaginary mobs. In fact, the exterior of the Chamber had been converted into a barometer, from which might be calculated the mercurial state of Club-feeling.

The election of Louis Napoleon Bonaparte for Paris, and several departments, had opened a fresh source of agitation, which came mingling with the currents of Socialism, Communism, and all those other turbid springs that descended from the Faubourgs. The doubt as to what the Assembly might do, attracted masses of people towards that quarter. Large groups would form near the bridge, on the bridge, and particularly on the Place de la Concorde, whenever the sun was endurable; and when the heat proved too oppressive, the *marroniers* of the Tuileries Gardens would throw their softly magnificent and delicious shade over the politicians in *blouses*, with their stunted black pipes, poisoning the odours of flowers, that used to breathe for playful children, and their nurses and mothers. Among those groups might be seen a new race of agitating

Propagandists. Hard-cheeked men, wearing stiff military stocks, and with the old unmistakeable whisker, cut to the boot-like shape that Italy presents on a map of Europe. These men told how fields were won. They had served under the Empire.

On this day, there were crowds on the Place de la Concorde, among whom it was evident a rising Bonapartist sympathy was beginning to manifest itself. It was deemed necessary to push back these groups from time to time; and as Clément Thomas, the Commander-in-Chief of the National Guards—a decided Anti-Bonapartist—was performing his duty, with an ill-relished zeal, a pistol-shot was fired at him, accompanied by a cry of *Vive l'Empereur!* The person was arrested, and there was an end of it. Rumour, that seldom takes a story as she finds it, or who—not to be too unjust to the lady of the hundred tongues—never waits to know the truth, but takes the head or the tail thereof, whichever first comes to mouth, and then fits on the fragment to the best body she can fabricate—while running at full speed, this rumour trebled the shots, and trebled the cries, and persuaded herself into the belief that a Bonapartist conspiracy had broken out.

We left M. de Lamartine seated on the steps of the tribune, as simply as a boy tired at play: sud-

denly he was seen to spring to his feet, in the full recovery of his native dignity. There was a hurrying to and fro, a whisper thrilling along the benches; the President rang his bell, and the members were exhorted to take their places; the galleries were subdued into awe, the fair ones in front leaning over, with wonder-stricken faces. M. de Lamartine began :—

"Citizen representatives,—a fatal circumstance has just interrupted the speech that I had the honour to address to the Assembly. While I was speaking of the conditions necessary for the reconstitution of order, and of the securities that we felt every day disposed to make for the preservation of authority and public morality, in all the faculties given by the Revolution to the nation—a shot, several gun-shots, it is said, were fired close to the Commander of the National Guard of Paris; another was fired on one of the brave officers of the army; and a third, I am assured, struck the breast of an officer of the National Guard. These gun-shots were accompanied by cries of '*Vive l'Empereur!*' This," he continued to say, strangely forgetful of the *émeutes* at Rouen and Limoges, "was the first drop of blood that had stained the Revolution of the 24th of February." He then proceeded, while the Assembly was in a state of consternation, to announce that the Government had, even before

this occurrence, prepared a project of law, closing France against the Pretender, who believed himself the heir of the Emperor. He would present it at once; and he added, "When the audacity of faction is thus concocted in *flagrant délit*, and taken with its hand in French blood, the law ought to be applied by acclamation."

This proposition was itself as much a *coup-de-théâtre* as a *coup-d'état;* rather, it was a *coup-d'état*, carried under favour of a *coup-de-théâtre.* The Assembly rang with applause, mingled with shouts of "*Vive la République!*" In a moment that law would have been carried, and Louis Napoleon Bonaparte deprived of his right to sit in the Assembly, and of all his rights. Republican fury and fierce thoughtlessness would, in a moment of surprise, of passing emotion, and quick credulity, have sealed the more slowly-deliberated and coldly-weighed decree of the Monarchy. Yes; all this would have been perpetrated in an instant, only for the voice of General Larabit, which was heard in its shrill, hissing tone, protesting against such a monstrosity as a law voted by acclamation. He is a man of somewhat eccentric bearing, this brave General Larabit, and must have been handsome, with his regular features and fine black hair; but his teeth are gone, and he looks faded rather than old. This living fragment of the Empire stopped the triumphant

oratorical judgment that was about to crush the son of the good King of Holland and the beloved Hortense. Lamartine read the decree, but shrunk from demanding its immediate adoption. He missed his blow by the postponement. He committed a worse fault than that, if we may call it a fault: he resumed his speech. The man of wit will sacrifice a friend to his jest. The orator sacrifices the reputation of the man of action, and the statesman, to a speech. M. de Lamartine spoke what had been prepared, because it was prepared; but that which would have been pure spirit without the intervening incident was now but a weak dilution.* He had armed himself with a grand image, and he could not refrain from flashing it on the eyes of the Assembly. From the proud position of the vindicator of the Republic from a threatened Emperor, he fell back into the common-place clap-trap of defence against an imaginary charge. He had been accused of conspiracy; yes, he had "conspired with Sobrier and with Blanqui; but did they know he had conspired? He had conspired as the conductor conspires with the lightning, in order to attract the electricity and give it an innocent direction." He

* Lord Erskine knew better when he stopped short in an oration after a quarter of an hour, seeing that the point he had made told on the Jury. He disappointed his audience, but won his cause.

had, in plain language, converted these men, as he fondly imagined, from their resolution to set up a Dictatorship; and, after all, the whole of the day's exciting proceedings did no more than win for M. de Lamartine the *soubriquet of the Paratonnerre.*

The two Bonapartes again renewed the expression of their democratic sentiments, and protested against their cousin being held answerable for acts done in his name.

The vote of confidence was eventually accorded by 569 to 112.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AGITATION ON THE SUBJECT OF LOUIS NAPOLEON—DEBATE IN THE ASSEMBLY REGARDING HIS ADMISSION—PORTRAIT OF LEDRU-ROLLIN.

THE next day, Tuesday, the 10th of June, was all agitation within and without the Assembly. The question of Louis Napoleon Bonaparte's admission was on the order of the day. There was an immense display of military force about the Assembly. At one moment the shops in the neighbourhood of the Tuileries and Madeleine were closed, owing to a panic caused by a charge of the *Garde Mobile* upon an offensive mob, but which happily led to no bloodshed. There could be no doubt whatever that the rejection of Louis Napoleon would have produced an *émeute*.

There were three reports from Committees appointed to examine as many returns. Two were for the admission—one for exclusion. The reporter

for admission was Jules Favre, representing the Committee appointed to test the validity of the nomination for La Charente Inférieure. M. Buchez, representing the tenth bureau, opposed his admission for the Department of the Seine. M. Desmares, representing the sixth bureau, recommended his admission for the Department of l'Yonne.

M. Jules Favre, the ex-Secretary of Ledru-Rollin, and ex-Under-Secretary of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, in supporting the admission of Louis Napoleon, found himself in his proper element. He had his vengeance to take for the mortification to which he had been exposed by the cruel isolation in which he had been left, on the application for leave to prosecute Louis Blanc. In the well-assumed attitude of an impartial judge, and independent vindicator of the rights of the people to choose their representatives, he was dealing the severest condemnation upon his own tyrannical interference with the rights of electors, exhibited in his Ministerial circulars and dictatorial delegation to irresponsible Commissioners. What matter? The Government he wanted to punish stood committed to the introduction of a decree for the exclusion of Louis-Napoleon, while a vote of the Assembly for the admission of the Prince would nullify such decree, and shake the Executive Commission to pieces. A well-devised scheme of vengeance was dressed in

the dignified trappings of law and popular rights. "Louis-Napoleon was a representative of the people. Let him come and repeat the generous expressions that had been pronounced in that tribune by members of his family."

To such a masterly dialectician, it was idle to oppose the loose, though warm and earnest declamation of poor M. Buchez, the Ex-President of the Assembly, already made scape-goat for those whose personal dignity had suffered in the invasion of the 15th of May. M. Viellard, the aged tutor of Louis Napoleon, read a letter from his pupil, protesting against his name being used as an excuse for intrigue, and expressing how ardently he desired to see the Republic established on a sure basis. M. Fresneau, a young member, who gave promise of ability, protested at once in favour of the Republic, and in favour of the heir of so much glory. Louis Blanc, whose ambition it was to stand well with Corsica, for which he had made great and successful efforts to be returned, and who was connected, remotely it was said, with the Bonapartes and the Pozzo di Borgos, carried the Montagnards with him to the side of Louis Napoleon. In doing so, he broached a doctrine touching the Presidency of the Republic, which was afterwards adopted by his party, that there ought to be no President at all; that the sovereignty should lie with the people,

through their representatives, and that Presidency, except simple Presidency of the Assembly, would be Monarchy in another shape.

Ledru-Rollin came forward now in the name of the Government to support the report, which went for the exclusion of Louis Napoleon. How could they call the votes of a few departments, the voice of the whole people? Were they, he continued to ask, better Revolutionists than the authors of the Declaration of Rights of 1793, and *they* laid it down, that the sovereignty of the people lay in the whole people, and that when that sovereignty, existing in the whole, was violated, insurrection became justifiable. If one department might elect Louis Napoleon, another department might elect the Prince de Joinville, or the Duc de Bordeaux; and if all the other departments protested against such an act, the sovereignty of the people in its *ensemble* should be respected. He approved of the act, by which the Bonaparte family had been reinstated in their rights, it was a magnanimous act, and worthy of the Republic; but when they found, with respect to one member a flagrant conspiracy against the Republic, they were called on to maintain the law, as it existed against him. He then went on to state, that an examination was going forward which had led to arrests. At Paris there was a system of organized seduction, by which per-

sons were entrapped, in order to form a new Imperial Guard; money was distributed; wine given in profusion to drink the toast of the Emperor Napoleon. An attempt had been committed the day before in their own neighbourhood. They might have all heard, as he had, between the Porte St. Denis, and the Porte St. Martin, the cries of *Vive l'Empereur !* Three Napoleonist journals had appeared within the last few days. In presence of such facts their duty was clear. They should maintain the law of 1832.

Ledru-Rollin and the Government were beaten. And now a word about Ledru-Rollin. Notwithstanding that I was under the influence of prejudice against this gentleman, entirely on account of his public conduct, a prejudice too generally shared, to make the avowal a shame, I must confess that his oratorical power took me by surprize. Sincerity of conviction, is admittedly a main element of oratorical success, and there could be no doubt of the sincerity of Ledru-Rollin's love for the Republic, and of his apprehension of a second Bonaparte. The Revolution had thrown up many men, but of those who had hitherto lain in obscurity, very few proved of any value, even in the way of talent. The names that still shone out most conspicuously were old familiar names. The Republic had not yet found its incarnation. The nearest represen-

tation of its spirit, seemed to be Ledru-Rollin. In his novel position, this revolutionist exhibited qualities, such as almost caused him to be regarded as a new man. The Chamber of Deputies was not his sphere. He entered it under the repugnant fame of a prosecuted, and if not pardoned, neglected speech. Violence so great, as to provoke the arm of the law, and so pointless, as on mature reflexion, to inspire but contempt, proved but an unpropitious herald. Nor did the new hero, who aspired to the leadership of the Republican party, inspire much reverential dread. He looked a man that would elbow others out of his way, take the first place by storm, lose his breath, slip, and tumble amidst jibes and laughter.

His person is large and bulky, his face full, round and ruddy, his eye small and restless; and taken altogether, one would say that he was a jovial, reckless fellow, full of animal spirits, who while aspiring to lead, was likely to become an instrument in the hands of acute schemers, whose bidding he would do, be that bidding what it might, rather than not be chief. His nature is rather thoughtless than bad; but capable of badness, through a readiness to accept, as inevitable necessities, the most perverse rules of political conduct. He might be used as the powerful, blind battering ram of factions, to level the walls of the State, but never

could he rise to the rank of an intelligent leader, or evince firmness sufficient to act as moderator. M. Ledru-Rollin possesses one quality, which of itself explains much of his showy, but ephemeral success. He has concentrated his attention upon one subject—that of the history of the Revolution. He knows it in all its details. He has it at his fingers' ends. Few Frenchmen ever so concentrate their faculties upon one point; more generally do they imitate the versatility of their Voltaire, aspiring to be thought acquainted with all possible subjects.

In this respect they differ widely from the Englishman, whose characteristic boast is that he knows his business, and feels no sense of humiliation, but often the contrary, that he knows nothing else. This generality of range makes the Frenchman the more agreeable talker, but the worse doer. He skims the field, but cannot sink the mine-shaft. A debate on foreign politics will set a multitude of French deputies, on making the tour of the globe. In the English House of Commons, it is listened to with languid inattention. For the same reason a question of law that would excite all the interest of the English Parliament, because of its local personal bearing on individual rights, would pass unheeded in the Chamber of Deputies. The English like law debates; the French rail against *avocas-*

serie. Ledru-Rollin would be shocked to learn that he possessed any quality in common with Englishmen, yet he owes his influence to the limited, but accurate range of his information regarding the great Revolution. The best, perhaps the only good speech he ever made in the Chamber of Deputies was his last. It turned upon a law of the Convention. M. Hébert, the Minister of Justice, sought to justify the prohibition of the right of public meeting by a law of the Convention, of doubtful application, and which had fallen into disuse. The Minister had, moreover, broached some flagrant heresies, and had by the arbitrary character of his doctrines, tended not only to precipitate the Revolution, but to give it the sanctity of violated principles, warranting any sacrifice for their assertion on the part of a spirited and free people.

M. Paillet, an eminent member of the Paris bar, and a very elegant speaker, was walking to the tribune, when Ledru-Rollin, with characteristic audacity, sprang before him. It must be confessed, that if the evidence of perfect aptitude for the task he had undertaken could justify his assumption, he stands acquitted of the charge of gentle violence, which his eminent legal rival might have brought against him. Instead of declamation or sarcasm,

M. Ledru-Rollin confined himself to a clear, terse exposition of the law, and with perfect tact and judgment, estimated the effect to be produced on the public mind, by an easy confutation of the Minister of Justice. It was from this opening, made from the firm footing of law, that we next see Ledru-Rollin leading the armed democracy into the temple of his own triumph. As the Revolution formed all his knowledge, so was it his passion; he worshipped its excesses, with the blind partiality of a lover; and as it was natural for such an admirer to imitate, and choose for himself a model from his own mythology, in which the Dantons, Couthons, St. Justs, and Robespierres, were the Jupiters, Neptunes, and Apollos—he chose Danton, and so acted, as if according to some metemphsycosis, the spirit of the great tribune had passed into his own not less herculean frame. Ledru-Rollin desires to pass for the Danton of February, and he has so far succeeded, that he is to Danton, what 1848 is to 1793. The former is to the latter, what a tragedy on the stage is to a tragedy in real life; only that there did happen in this instance, what sometimes has occurred before the curtain,—the buttons slipped from the foils and real blood was shed.

A people too long steeped in voluptuousness,

and who pant for enjoyments after the over-excited sensibility has been relaxed, get a taste for crime, coloured by romance. Besotted voluptuousness in power has marked the coming fall of sceptres and thrones, by cruelties. A besotted people acts in the same way, unless restrained by the authority and example of some sound part. When Louis XIV. passed the plough over the monastery of the enlightened, but ascetic Jansenists, he gave full rein to licence and bigotry: when he revoked the Edict of Nantes, he deprived his people, in the same way, of the wholesome rivalry of Protestant example. Priesthood and people alike ran rapidly into corruption, and the consequence was, the catastrophes of 1793 and 1794. There was a gloomy grandeur in the crimes of the Convention, calculated to stimulate the jaded fancies of a well-read, but ill-taught generation. The theatres of the Boulevards, the Roman-*feuilleton* of Dumas and Sue, the hybrid German-Gallican-Spanish horrors of Hugo, had left their coppery taste on parched and thirsty tongues. A real drama was wanted, of which Paris should be the theatre, with a general licence of imitation to the provinces. The only difficulty was, as to the cast of parts. So many had been deifying Robespierre—the last chaunt of Lamartine, which, from making him high-priest of his fame, converted him into the

high-priest of February—that intoxicating melody, confounding the groans of the guillotine; this, with more prosaic efforts, had raised up a host of candidates for the part.

Louis Blanc appeared to have distanced all competitors; but although only one grown viper might look triumphant, there was yet a full nest, with ready poison and ready fangs. There were fewer candidates, although still too many for the Heberts and Couthons. There was but one for Vergniaud, the orator of the Girondists; and no one disputed the claim of Ledru-Rollin to Danton. One reason was, that Danton was but the rude pioneer, the unintelligent precursor of his more subtle pseudo-philosophical rival. His death was but the removal of the machine, that, having battered the wall, lay an obstacle in the breach, across the tide of the advancing victors. Another reason was, that there were few who could dress the part.

Even French Revolutionists cannot turn out a large stock of very big men. Ledru-Rollin was big enough to fill the part to which he aspired. He wanted the lion-like roar of his awful prototype, and, affecting it, made himself hoarse; so that, after a short while speaking, if the eyes were shut, the ears would fancy that they listened to the croaking of a gigantic frog. Let him roar like any

nightingale, our Bully Bottom never could inspire terror, or create any impression more unfavourable than that of an *enfant brutal*. When the rude, blustering *bon enfant* had possessed himself of the sword of State and the key of the treasury together, people naturally feared that the joke might be carried too far. The quantity of unaccounted-for money that had been spent was something real, although the brandishing of the sword might give no more than fright; and at length sober people began to conclude that Monsieur Ledru-Rollin was a very dangerous man. Like Danton, he was a politician —not a Socialist. He had nothing in common with the Blancs, Leroux, and Proudhons—the Cabets, Raspails, and Blanquis. His idea of revolution was not spuriously philosophical. He wanted to create armies of the north, and armies of the south. He panted to see the Republican flag, red or tri-colour, borne at the same time over the Alps and across the Rhine. He panted to deluge Germany with troops, and give the hand to the Poles, on the understanding of destroying Monarchy in Europe. He adored even the assignats. He would re-enact the Revolution, with all its consequences. He would continue the Convention, and make it perpetual. In all this he was thoroughly in earnest, and so far had the advantage of earnestness; but,

as he was obliged to tamper with Socialist and Communist sects, whose doctrines he could not comprehend, and must have hated and despised for the obstacles they threw in his way, so did his earnestness give way to temporizing, for which he was unfitted, and by degrees he became weak, and more weak.

Upon the day which first brought Ledru-Rollin before us, he appeared to most advantage. He was not at that period compromised by damaging negociations with Socialists. He had the feeling of the thoroughly Republican part of the Assembly with him against the threatened Empire. And was that Republic, for which he had so long, and at length so victoriously struggled, about to merge into a new sort of Monarchy? Was it to be sacrificed to the shadow of a name—to a popular delusion? Had they been engaged in making for themselves a trap into which they were to fall, amidst the laughter of the world? So thought, so felt, so feared, the disciple of Danton; and in the reality of his fear he became eloquent, touching, powerful, and rose to the dignity of first champion of the French Republic. The Assembly responded to every sentence—the audience and the orator were at home; as he felt, they felt; as he spoke, they responded; he was master of the Assembly. As he descended,

he was complimented by a throng of admirers; he was congratulated, and embraced, and—beaten. The mysterious murmur of the rising *émeute* shook each hand as it dropped the ball into the urn. Nevertheless, the orator had fairly won a triumph, and it was his greatest, and indeed last; for he was nearer the edge of dismissal than he could have dreamed.

We have seen that upon occasion M. Ledru-Rollin could assume the cold manner of a law pleader, and adapt himself to the proprieties of parliamentary discussion. As a demagogue, he ought to be effective; but, curiously enough, the Revolution that opened wide the Clubs, and gave the thoroughfares to spouters of all kinds, has not proved favourable to that style which would appear so popular in its character. M. Ledru-Rollin has warmth, fluency, look, action, such as ought to strike a mixed assembly; but he has not drank at the well of the new philosophy; his brain does not reel with the mystic materialism of the school of anti-property and anti-family profligates, who fancy that they are filled with a holy fanaticism. He sees too clearly what he wants, although that which he wants is extravagant and unattainable. The gentleman, the man of the world, the sharer in the pleasures of society, the sympathiser with the con-

ventionalisms and rules of the civilized world, all cry out against him. Not being a moderate Republican, and not being a Socialist, he is nothing. The huge painted reputation that was to have borne the flag of the Red Republic aloft, has already burst—M. Ledru-Rollin has ceased to be anything in the revolutionary world.

CHAPTER XIX.

LOUIS NAPOLEON RESIGNS—HIS LETTER EXCITES ANGER —BILL AFFECTING OLD OFFICERS CAUSES DISSATISFACTION—FATAL COLLISION AT GUERET—PIERRE LEROUX, THE COMMUNIST.

It was fully expected that, on the following day, Wednesday the 14th, some communication would have taken place relative to the vote admitting Louis Napoleon. It was known, in fact, that the Executive Commission of Government had held a consultation with Ministers, on the propriety of resigning. The design was abandoned, and, by a tacit agreement not to embarrass the Government at such a moment, no notice was taken in the Assembly of the rumours afloat.

The next day was not, however, to pass over without a scene. The debate turned on Algeria, which it was proposed to assimilate to France, a proposition resisted, and not carried into effect

when the Chairman announced that he had received a letter from the Citizen Louis Napoleon Bonaparte. This letter, from the extraordinary emotion it caused, we beg to introduce.

"London, 14th June, 1848.

"Monsieur le Président,

"I was about to leave for my post, when I learn that my election serves as a pretext for deplorable troubles, and fatal errors. I have not sought the honour of becoming a representative of the people, because I was aware of the unjust suspicions of which I have been the object; and I should feel even less disposed to seek for power. If the *people impose duties upon me, I shall know how to fulfil them;* but I disavow all those who lend me ambitious intentions, such as I have not. My name is a symbol of order, of nationality, and of glory; and it is with the greatest pain I should see it serve to augment the troubles and divisions of the country. To avoid so great a misfortune, I should prefer remaining in exile: I am ready to make any sacrifice for the sake of the happiness of France. Have the goodness, M. le Président, to communicate this letter to my colleagues. I send you a copy of my letter of thanks to the Electors. Receive the assurance of my distinguished sentiments.

"CHARLES LOUIS NAPOLEON BONAPARTE."

This letter excited indescribable indignation. General Cavaignac, then Minister of War, said that his emotion was so great that he could not give it adequate expression. What he remarked, he said, in a piece destined to become historical was, that the word Republic was not once mentioned. This remark was hailed with shouts of *Vive la République!* M. Baune exclaimed, that he would protest against the declaration of war made by a Pretender. They did not fear an 18th Brumaire. This was met by loud cries of "No—no!" and "Let him come and try it." M. Anthony Thouret signalised particularly the phrase, 'If the people impose duties upon me, I shall know how to fulfil them:' that phrase he considered a call to revolt against the French Republic, and demanded, on the instant, that Louis Napoleon be declared traitor to his country. M. Flocon disdainfully reminded the Assembly that they did not manifest emotion on the 15th of May, and ought not now to exhibit such before an individual. The Minister of War moved, that no resolution should be taken on the spot, but that they should adjourn till next day. M. Jules Favre, who had been mainly instrumental in having the election of Louis Napoleon ratified, moved that the letter be placed in the hands of the Minister of Justice. The Minister of Finance supported the motion for adjournment, contemptuously

telling the Assembly that they were, by their anger, doing the Pretender too much honour. M. Duprat denounced the address to the Electors as factious.

The Commander of the National Guards next ascended the tribune, and stated that to-morrow, if his information idd not mislead him, it was probably a battle in the streets they might have to fight. He would advise them to be prepared for a battle as well as a discussion to-morrow. This announcement produced much additional agitation, which, when it had a little subsided, General Thomas proposed that they should declare that whoever took up arms in the cause of a pretender to despotism, and for foreign gold, should be pronounced a traitor to his country. This was hailed with acclamation. The Finance Minister rose, amidst violent tumult, to state that measures amply sufficient for the preservation of the public peace had been taken, and that the Assembly might adjourn till next day, when he was quite sure there would be no battle; upon which this agitated Assembly separated at seven o'clock, amidst cries of *Vive la République!*

When the Assembly met the following day, the renewal of the debate relative to Louis Napoleon was stopped by the following letter of resignation:

"London, June 15, 1848.

"Monsieur le Président,

"I felt pride in having been elected representative of the people in Paris, and in three other departments. It was in my opinion an ample reparation for thirty years' exile, and six years' captivity. But the injurious suspicions to which my election has given rise, the disturbance of which it was the pretext, and the hostility of the Executive Power, impose upon me the duty of refusing an honour which I am supposed to have obtained by intrigue. I desire order and the maintenance of a wise, great, and liberal Republic; and since I involuntarily cause disorder, I deposit, not without regret, my resignation in your hands. Calmness, I trust, will now be restored, and enable me to return to France as the humblest of citizens, but also as one the most devoted to the repose and prosperity of his country.

"CHARLES LOUIS NAPOLEON BONAPARTE."

This letter caused no particular mark of interest, although it relieved the Assembly from the renewal of an unpleasant discussion. The Assembly took up an election petition, and concluded with Algeria. The city too, presented no deviation from its

habitual scenes, and all apprehension about Louis Napoleon, appeared to have subsided. How well it is we cannot read the future, and are allowed to enjoy things as they come! So flat a termination of a formidable incident warrants a flat remark.

With the resignation of Louis Napoleon, the city returned to an apparent state of tranquillity, and his name seems to have passed out of recollection, as if the whole incident was but a lively episode, the interest of which had served only to form a momentary diversion from the main plot of the revolution.

The proceedings in the Assembly, on Saturday the 17th of June, were sufficiently animated. There was, in the first place, a sharp discussion with regard to a petition addressed by a number of officers of rank, who had been forced into retirement for ever from active service, by a decree of the Provisional Government—a measure which gave great offence to the superior officers of the army, and tended to turn them against the Republic. The measure was, however, maintained; for it was the members of the Provisional Government that were still in power.

A more serious subject, because it bore upon the passions of the lower order—already in such a dangerous state of fermentation—was that intro-

duced by the new Communist member, M. Pierre Leroux, relative to a collision that had taken place in the department of La Creuse, owing to the resistance of the people to the collection of the 45 centimes additional tax, imposed by the Provisional Government in its financial necessities. At a place called Gueret, the people converted a tree of liberty into a gallows, by suspending to it a rope, replaced the tri-color by a black flag, and announced that any person committing the crime of paying the odious impost should be hung. The National Guards were called out, and after an irritating parley of some hours, a couple of shots came from the crowd, on which the National Guards fired, when ten were killed, and five wounded. Such was the circumstance that the lately-elected Communist member for Paris brought under the notice of Government, and the Government could only deplore so fatal an occurrence, whilst it was declared to be impossible to renounce the tax.

M. Pierre Leroux had already made a speech on the subject of colonizing Algeria—a fruitful subject for a practical statesman. The French are not gifted with colonizing powers; they have not the patient industry and laborious self-denial suited for colonists. Paris is the paradise of Frenchmen, and to leave it, is exile and misery. In Paris the well-

instructed and refined find salons; and the workmen, clubs. All find promenades and theatres; all are easily indulged, and all must have indulgence. The animal spirits of Frenchmen are of the light, effervescing kind, that run off in chat, gossip, and criticism, and play off their emotions on kindred spectacles and bespangled puerilities. It is all expansion, and no concentration—no settled and deep purposes, long looked at, and calmly resolved. The consequence is, that the northern coast of Africa, opposite the shores of France, and forming another arm of that basin to which the wealth of the old world converges, to whose banks on all sides civilization has repaired—that tempting, gifted country, the site of old Carthage, the residence of Saint Augustine, the early seat of Christianity, is, after eighteen years in the hands of the French, what barbarism has made it! In their hands it is a vast military hunting-ground, like that torn from the Ameers of Scinde, in which the wild sons of the desert are the prey. It is a mere military possession—a burthen and a drain on France; a fiery furnace, in which her young conscripts are annually devoured; a school of demoralization for her army, perhaps by way of compensation; a safety-valve for Europe. It is an outlet for French enterprize, but a shame to French ability.

M. Pierre Leroux, when treating this vast subject, treated it exactly as he did the *émeute* at Gueret, and, in fact, as he did every other question on which he subsequently spoke. M. Leroux would think of nothing, or speak of nothing, but his own model scheme of society. He saw in Algeria a fine theatre, where to establish a colony of Communists. He saw in the fatal collision at Gueret, evidence afforded of the hollow foundation on which a perverted civilization, as he took it to be, stood. The workmen of Paris had taken a dreamer from his closet, and made him their representative. Among a set of Germans, who had passed their lives in the seclusion of a university, smoking and building cloudy realms for the imagination to wander in, Pierre Leroux might have found disciples. Amongst a set of tradesmen he proved a bore—*ni plus ni moins*. A less dangerous Diogenes never rolled his tub into the haunts of civilized men. His appearance was that of a man innocent of the ways of the world, and absent even to the point of forgetting the wash-hand basin and brush. Beneath a prodigious mass, or mop of black hair, as wild and entangled as the brushwood of a virgin forest, slumber a pair of misty, dreamy eyes, while the spectator's ears are regaled with the sounds of a sing-song voice, going through an interminable

history of human society, from the earliest days to present times, for the purpose of showing that the world has hitherto been on a wrong social track, and struggling in the toils of a great mistake. So little have Leroux's treatises been read, that a couple of speeches were listened to with comparative attention. By degrees, they began to be as tedious as twice-told tales. The auditory would begin to doubt if they had not heard the same sentences before. Memory that people call treacherous, by a modest self-application, proved doubly treacherous with regard to her devoted worshipper, Leroux, all whose efforts proved to be but one well-learned theme. No; he did not learn his lesson by heart, but used to read it. If he did not tax his memory, as we were by a strange lapse of our own forgetting, he was not sparing of his industry, for he used to commit to paper his endless dissertations. One day, however, a wicked wight determined to extinguish our light, produced one of the philosopher's printed books, and proved that the essay or speech to which they had been listening was a mere transcript by the philosopher himself from his printed publications.

Pierre Leroux never well recovered this blow. When he attempted to read afterwards, a resolution was gravely proposed that no books should be read at

the tribune. Well do I recollect the scowl with which the philosopher slowly ascended the Mountain.

The return of Leroux was an indication of a dangerous state of feeling amongst the lower orders; but a better antidote to his pernicious doctrines could not have been afforded than his investment with power, which enabled him to make himself and his books equally ridiculous by a public performance in the National Assembly.

Let us conclude with an example which paints of itself the mind of this fantastic monomaniac. In a project of a Constitution which he published, there appeared the following odd article:—

"*Article* 100.—Poplars shall be planted, and kept up with care, in all the communes of the Republic. The State shall have for its seal a cylindrical altar, surmounted by a cone, on which shall be a spherical ray. This seal shall be placed in the hands of the National Management, to be stamped, *en relief* of wax, on all treaties with foreign nations, and on all laws. Each of the three corps of the representation shall have for seal one of the *solides* of Revolution, whose unity composes the seal of the State. The Executive body shall have for seal the cylinder, or its cubical profile; the Legislative Corps, the cone on its profile, the equi-

lateral triangle; the Scientific Corps, the sphere, with rays on its profile, the circle surrounded with rays. The seal of each of these three bodies of the national representatives shall be placed in the hands of the president of the corps, to be applied to all its acts."

CHAPTER XX.

M. MARRAST.

On Monday, the 19th of June, M. Marrast ascended the tribune, with a draft of the Constitution in his hand. We shall speak more of M. Marrast, for the present, than of his work. This gentleman owes his fame and his position to the *National* newspaper, which in his hands suffered nothing from the reputation it had acquired by its having served as the political pathway of Thiers, and the powerful organ of Armand Carrel. If the coarser, although not bolder hands, of the disciples of Godefroy Cavaignac, in the *Réforme,* thrust the mob upon the devoted *Gardes Municipaux,* who were butchered in the Château d'Eau—beckoned on the infuriated victors to the Tuileries, and then led them, intoxicated with triumph, to the Chamber of Deputies, and from thence to the Hôtel-de-Ville

—it was the successor of Armand Carrel who had prepared the way for such surprisingly facile triumphs.

Godefroy Cavaignac and Armand Carrel loom through the past like the demigods of Republicanism. The former leant to Socialism; the latter was a pure Republican, who regarded the social institutions of society as the results of feelings and habits venerable and sacred, and to be modified by society as it advanced, instead of being savagely dealt with by the State. Cavaignac and Carrel were on the point of separating, because the latter would not accept the doctrines with which the former was affected, rather than imbued, for he eventually yielded to the clear reasoning of his commanding friend.

The successors of Cavaignac in the *Réforme* took up the discarded errors of their master, which fitted their coarse natures perfectly. Marrast and his friends remained true to the teachings and example that had been set them. For years before the Revolution of February, the *National* newspaper was, beyond all comparison, the most attractively, if not the best written in France. It was singularly terse and graphic. The year 1847 gave ample scope to the chief writer of this formidable journal; it was a year of corruption in all classes—the year of persecutions of Ministers, and their associates and agents—of disgusting exposures, of rapid speculations for sake of boundless luxury. The *National*,

while treating these matters with perfect power, yet did so with perfect propriety. There was intense disgust, but the feeling was never allowed the freedom of coarse or overstrained language. Neat was the operation, and skilful the exposure. It was the hand of science that laid bare the plague-spots. Calm and earnest, but, oh! how cutting was the language of this journal, all through this melancholy year! It could be playful too, and never so dangerous as when in play. How slyly would a corner of the château drapery be raised, and the public allowed to peep at the performance of some family intrigue—political, of course. It would not be fair now to revert to scenes that might be summoned to deserted halls, under the shadow of misfortune.

If the *Réforme* did the rough work of knocking down the pillars of the Monarchy, and did it easily, it was because the *National* had corroded them. If there was no fervour of friendship, no sympathy, no zeal to answer the royal summons in the hour of need, it was because a subtle dissolvent had been operating too long, and had made the heart dry, and unnerved the hand.

Marrast is the Voltaire who preceded the Revolution of February. Well for him would it have been that the analogy had become perfect, by his not

being called to make himself an actor in the work he did so much to prepare. Marrast, from having been so popular, is now one of the most unpopular of public men, and yet I could never learn why. Before the Assembly met, Marrast was well spoken of. It was said, that at the Board of the Provisional Government he had manifested remarkable ability; that he had prevented many sad mistakes. The best proof that there must have been good foundation for the favourable opinion entertained of Marrast amongst the better classes is, the fierce hatred that the Socialists began to evince towards him, because he had, in fact, defeated their designs. It is on record, that when Barbès, Blanqui, and their adherents, forced their way into the Hôtel-de-Ville, on the 15th of May, after the invasion of the Chamber, the cry was, "We must finish with Marrast!" The object of their search was at the time surrounded by a strong body of friends in a room, which was not discovered, where they were determined to sell their lives dearly, for they were well armed.

As the moderate Republican became unpopular, not only with the Socialists, but with all other parties, so Marrast suffered proportionally in repute, for he was believed to be the virtual adviser of the different moderate administrations that succeeded

each other from June to December. In order to complete our picture, we must anticipate a little the order of time. M. Marrast was elected President of the Assembly, and immediately installed in the princely residence allotted under the Monarchy, to the President of the Chamber of Deputies. He at once fixed his weekly reception night, on which his salons were thrown open for company, amidst a blaze of light and luxury, such as would not probably be witnessed at Washington in the official residence of a Polk, or a Taylor. The palaces of the ex-royal family were obliged to pay tribute to the Presidency, and scones, vases, and bronzes spoke eloquently for the taste and love of luxury of the ex-editor of the *National*. It was said that it was not only in the salons destined to the reception of the public, that were found these regal spoils. This might be scandal. The silver cradle of an heir to the Crown, rocked to Republican dreams, it was said, the offspring of the monthly President of the Assembly. The brevity of the official tenure of office, added to the ridicule. It was so like making the most of an unaccustomed feast. It was the amusing dream of the cobbler's wife in the play and pantomime, who, in her brief assumption of the fine lady, does make the most of her opportunity. Ridicule is killing in France—

our Voltaire the second handled the weapon with too much effect, to need being told that; and yet blinded by his own evil star, he was weak enough to give his enemies a ludicrous handle. Envy had much to do with all this, for the friends of Marrast urged with truth, that at a moment, when there was a suspension of *soirées*, to the ruin of the *petit commerce*, the man who set the *marchands* selling gloves, and shoes, and dresses, and revived the motion of hackney-coaches, was doing the State some service.

To add to the confusion of Marrast, he asked for an increase of pay, that he might spend more for the pleasure of honourable members, and for the benefit of the good citizens of Paris, and was refused. His good intentions were not even acknowledged. Although M. Marrast was a Republican, and had suffered imprisonment and exile for his opinions, and although not a whisper had ever been breathed against his probity, yet he had a meridional love of music, fine arts, and luxury, and was consequently a poor man. There is something of theatrical pomp in his air and manner. His entry into the National Assembly, so slow and measured, while he rolled his remarkably fine black eyes about, reminded the English spectator of Kean the lesser: his manner of taking the chair in

the Assembly was so awfully dignified, as to make one smile. Yet his mode of conducting business was a great improvement on that of his predecessors. He abandoned the odious hand-bell, which, whether in the old Chamber, or in the new Assembly, used to be the sole noisy stupid resource of parliamentary chairmen. It was about as happy an expedient, as if a big dog was set to bark to silence a pack in chorus. Marrast ruled the house by his eye, which he directed towards the most noisy; and by nominative appeals, accompanied by some slily satirical allusion, but by no means offensive, generally succeeded in a task, under which a stronger man of less tact and art, would have succumbed. Marrast would have probably been more happy in this sort of bye play, had he been encouraged; but urbanity formed no characteristic of the Assembly. The rising play of his features was but too often checked by some individual burst of savage rudeness, which he could bear well, or spiritedly repel if necessary. The repeated re-elections of this gentleman to the Presidential chair, showed how much the Assembly valued his real merits. The greatest compliment of all, was afforded by the Committee of the Constitution, which confided to his practised pen, the preparation of so important a document. When he appeared in the tribune, our

readers must now be aware,—the Assembly had not to encounter the awful brow of a Solon or Lycurgus. The French had, with characteristic appreciation of the fitness of things, chosen an *homme d'esprit*, to lay the foundation deep in time of their Republican Constitution.

The author did his work neatly, as might have been expected, and gave out all the articles in a delicate flute-like voice, that, had the subject been a chapter of Racine, would without doubt have been effective. This Constitution, be it remarked, was produced on the first day of a week, which was to be marked by one of the most fearful insurrections of which history makes mention. It would not be easy to determine, how far this project of a Constitution might have been an element in the causes that led to this insurrection. Perhaps it was regarded with profound indifference, perhaps no greater weight was attached to it than that of being the enunciated proof of what the workmen had already long known, that the *droit au travail*, which alone gave the Republic or the Constitution any value in their eyes, formed no part of the design of the Committee, over which the ex-editor of the *National* presided. Had the *bonnet-rouge* triumphed, the first victim of Socialist rage and disappointment, would in all probability have been

this man, whose whole life had been devoted to the cause of Republicanism.

More practical and positive motives than appear in a mere string of maxims, artistically attached into a code of political duties, are now gathering upon us, and give to our notes, of the next few days, a considerable degree of interest.

CHAPTER XXI.

VICTOR HUGO—LEON FAUCHER—DEBATE ON THE NATIONAL ATELIERS—AGITATION WITHOUT—MANŒUVRES OF THE CLUBS TO PRECIPITATE THE INSURRECTION—APATHY OF THE MIDDLE CLASSES, AND ITS CAUSES.

THE state of the national *ateliers*, which had been frequently referred to of late, in discussions arising incidentally, and generally expressive of dissatisfaction, was formally brought before the Assembly, on Tuesday the 20th of June, upon a demand for a grant of three millions of francs. It was Victor Hugo who opened the debate. This celebrated writer was returned for Paris only a little while before, amongst that strangely contrasted batch of members, to which we have had occasion to point attention.

Victor Hugo had been created a Peer of France by Louis-Philippe, a short time only before the

fall of the Monarch, and it was fondly hoped by his admirers, that the Upper House had been gifted with a Lamartine; which would have been a right royal gift. Victor Hugo was to have been a Lamartine only in the sense of an oratorical, and literary rival. As a politician, his presence was to have made, what Hugo rejoices in so much, an antithesis. His steady Monarchical brilliancies were to have outshone the eccentric Semi-Socialist flashes of the wandering star, that having visited all systems, and dallied a while within the sphere of their influence, resumed its lonely way through sublime solitudes, until it found a more powerful attraction in Robespierrian Republicanism—Robespierre with the idea *bien entendu,* and without the guillotine. Victor Hugo, it must be said in plain terms, failed in the Chamber of Peers. His eccentric bearing was not suited to an Assembly, where *convenance* presided with extreme rigour. Elderly gentlemen who had passed into the Chamber, through the magistracy, or the ministry, or the stern discipline of the camp, did not view with much favour, the entry of a writer whose freedom with history and what is more sacred still in the eyes of even French courtiers, with language even, was not atoned for by his genius. That dangerous shaft, a *mot* was shot over the head of the poet, more *spirituel* than any thing he had ever himself said,

for Victor Hugo with all his acknowledged power is not *spirituel*. By an allusion to the name of a tragedy, which is one of the most absurd and grotesque perversions of history on record, and in reply to the question, why did the King make Victor Hugo a Peer? it was said, *Le Roi s'amuse*. The qualities which had unfitted the chief of the romantic school of literature for the exclusive *bon ton* of the tribune of the Peers, might perhaps have served him with the National Assembly, only that he had been a Peer, and one so fresh from the hands of Louis-Philippe.

An ode on the birth-day of the Duc de Bordeaux, stood registered likewise against him, for it is one of the responsibilities, as it is one of the penalties of genius, that no act it ever does, can ever be covered with oblivion for sake of personal convenience. Genius is doomed by the rigorous fame awarded by the *vox populi*, to a glorious consistency of conduct. The great man cannot be exhibited in fragments—he must be seen all of a piece. The brighter the light, the darker the spot, and the more fascinating to the eye. The poet laureate of the legitimate Heir to the Crown, might after a certain lapse of time, pay court to the Monarch of July; but it would be a temptation to public faith, to proclaim too abruptly his new-born Republicanism; a greater still, to see him turn with the levity

of disappointed self-love to a rising Imperialism. There can be no harmony in such a life, although it should be passed in the melody of the sweetest versification; nor could the richest painting of the imagination give tone to such patch-work.

M. Victor Hugo is a born actor. His writings have the florid varnish of an acted style. The high gifts with which he has been endowed by Providence, have been perverted into a sleight of hand dealing with language. Where he might have soared, he has stooped to pick up odd discoveries, and make the queerest contrasts. His mind has become a kaleidescope, and his tongue can only utter puerile conceits. He believes that he has discovered the antithesis, or that at least he has revealed its power, and he thinks, speaks and acts, by a sort of double key—a new found harmony created from a forced consonance of things, the highest with things the most mean. He swoops from an Alpine altitude, to pick up a bauble; and although he may display agility, he is no longer the eagle looking unblenchingly at the sun. In the Chamber of Peers, the Vicomte Victor Hugo acted with an overstrained deferential courtesy. In the Assembly he tried to put on the air of a great champion, at one moment of the Republic, at another of endangered society. His large prominent, fair, and remarkable brow, would seem

charged with frowns; his voice would issue like avenging thunder, and his gestures perform their fitting accompaniments of extravagance. Yet he failed. With a good appearance, good voice, commanding action, and high fame, Victor Hugo utterly failed. More than once has he been driven from the tribune by clamorous impatience. Why? Because he is an actor, because he is artificial, vain and inconstant; because he thinks more of himself than of his cause, because he is not animated by a lofty self-sacrificing sincerity.

It is remarkable how few of the popular novel writers of France found their way into the National Assembly. Alexandre Dumas tried constituency after constituency, and failed. Eugène Sue, whose romances were written with a view of advancing Socialist doctrines, and which were imprudently admitted into such Journals as the *Débats*, *Presse* and *Constitutionnel*, was mentioned on some lists, but hardly attracted attention. Victor Hugo, who did find his way into the Assembly, received little respect. Dumas and Sue certainly did much to corrupt, the one the morals, the other to pervert the ideas of the reading and play-going public—and what part of the Parisian public is not *feuilleton*-reading and play-going?—and by this double corruption to prepare the *Révolution Démocratique et Sociale*; and yet these precursors of ruin were thrown aside

into obscurity and neglect the moment that their disciples began to put their doctrines into practice. Their own tales present no moral so good. The fanatic may find favour, but never the mere corrupter. With this introduction of Victor Hugo, we come to his speech regarding the national *ateliers*.

He acknowledged that those *ateliers* were the result of a necessity. Nevertheless, he could not conceal from himself that the money expended on them was so much lost. The result of four months had been nothing, or rather worse. The Monarchy had made *oisifs*—the Republic, *fainéants*. Such *fainéantisme* was fatal to civilization in Constantinople or Naples, but never would the reading and thinking workmen of Paris act like Lazzaroni in time of peace, to become Janissaries for a day of combat. Having paid many handsome compliments to the Parisian workmen, he proceeded to show that the civilization of Europe would be affected by the deterioration of the character of the Parisian populace. What Rome was formerly, he considered Paris to be now. What the *thinkers* of Paris prepared, the workmen of Paris executed. The workman was the soldier of the idea, and not of the *émeute*. It became, therefore, necessary that the national *ateliers* should be transformed promptly from a hurtful, into a useful institution.

While the orator was thus indulging in general reflections, he was interrupted by voices reminding him that they were all agreed as to what he was saying, but wanted a practical plan for accomplishing what all equally wished; but the orator could only throw out those general recommendations which were on every tongue, although by few expressed so eloquently. What added, he continued, to his inexpressible grief was, that while Paris was struggling in her paroxysm, London was rejoicing—her commerce had trebled; luxury, industry and wealth had there found refuge. Yes, England was seated laughing at the edge of the abyss into which France had fallen.

This speech resumed with completeness the vain prejudices of the *café*. Paris, the modern Rome—although Rome was the powerful organiser of ancient times — although Rome gave municipal government, and multiplied life throughout her members, while Paris cannot colonize abroad, and the French have yet to learn how to manage their local affairs without a full reliance on the capital! Paris, the great initiator in literature and philosophy!—although she has borrowed not only from the classics, but from England, from Spain, from Germany—and notwithstanding the attempt to revive the diatribes of the *café* against England and re-excite popular hatred, which had subsided in presence

of the calm impartiality and perfect good faith of England, while France was in the throes of her revolution! It is enough to say that the character of the statesman was in this speech.

One of the most prosaic and practical of men, M. Léon Faucher, rose after Victor Hugo. This gentleman had long been distinguished for the unwearied industry with which he applied himself to those economical questions, to the perfect understanding of which he attributes the commercial prosperity of England. He had visited the seats of our manufacturing industry. He had plunged boldly into our blue-books, through whose voluminous details he threaded his way sagaciously. He attended public meetings, conversed with public men, and gave to France the result of his labours in a couple of sound, well-written volumes, which have raised and established his fame. From England, M. Faucher returned a free-trader, and with his usual energy and strength of conviction laboured to break down the narrow and exclusive, the miserably exclusive spirit in which French commercial laws are conceived. With the wise little Duc d'Harcourt, he founded a society, which was the first effort made in France at getting up a regular series of public meetings for the discussion of political questions.

M. Faucher is a man of healthy mind, and

high courage—of which his appearance at this moment on the unpopular side of a most dangerously exciting question, might in itself be taken as proof. He entered at once upon the details of the question. They knew, he said, how from 13,000 men, who at first had been received in the national *ateliers*, the number had swelled to 120,000, which had been reduced to 105,000 or 107,000 by the late *recensement*: but what they did not know was, that there were from 50,000 to 60,000 persons at that moment demanding admission. Misery had, in fact, invaded all classes, and if they did not take care, all Paris would be sunk in it, and the provinces would soon follow. The case at that moment was, that one half of society was living on the other. He had made inquiries, and found that the national *ateliers* could not provide work for more than 10,000 persons. It was therefore an illusion to talk of assistance given in the shape of labour; it was charity under another name. He would prefer, therefore, while they were waiting more radical remedies, that they should give what they did give as charity, instead of under the form of pretended labour.

Having adverted to certain measures contemplated by Government, such as the resumption of railways by the State (to which we shall make

separate reference to his treating of that subject,) M. Faucher proceeded to say, that upon taking a census of the national *ateliers*, he found that there were in them from 40,000 to 50,000 persons connected with the different branches of building, and he argued, that the only way to give these men adequate employment would be to revive the business of building, which was then dead. The question, then, resolved itself into a revival of credit and confidence, and in order to do that, they should begin by erasing from their laws and decrees, all the bad principles that had been introduced into them—those attacks on property which had thrown the country into trouble and affright. So long as the State would not pay its debts and establish its own credit, so long would private credit be rendered impossible, and without credit there could be no work.

The state of the *ateliers nationaux*, the state of trade and commerce, and indeed the whole state of society were so succinctly put forward in this speech of M. Faucher, that it is unnecessary to pursue the subject further. What is most important for our present purpose to observe is, that it became evident to the workmen in the *ateliers* themselves, and to the Government, that the system would no longer be tolerated. The Assembly granted the demand, but added an article to the

bill, that for the future no larger sum than one million of francs could be asked for at one and the same time. It became then incumbent on the Minister of Public Works to find some means of thinning those establishments; nor was he taken unawares, for he had already made arrangements for sending several bodies of men to the provinces, to work at the *canalisation* of the Marne, and the Upper Seine, as well as on roads and buildings.

As the sitting of Wednesday, the 21st of June, was devoted to miscellaneous subjects, we may pause here for the purpose of following out the consequences of this discussion and vote affecting the national *ateliers* and the Clubs.

It was not within-doors to-day, but without that the interest really lay. Great agitation was remarked in the Faubourgs, as well as in the national *ateliers*. An immense mob collected before the Hôtel-de-Ville, and the police were beaten and ill used. Active agents from the Club of the *Droits de l'Homme*, the organisers of the coming struggle for the *République Démocratique et Sociale*, and some of the recognized chiefs of the movement passed the day in negociation back and forward between the national *ateliers* and the faubourgs. All means were put in force to stop the departure of the brigades or companies of men destined for the works of the Marne, the Upper

Seine, and other places. They were told that the country people were ill using those who had already departed.

A company of these men who had gone as far as Fontainebleau, where they were to have been met by agents from the Government, with the necessary instructions and advances of money, either from having been made to wait too long, or acting on previous instructions, grew, or pretended to grow, indignant, returned to Paris, and helped to swell the excitement and agitation. A meeting had been fixed for the following evening at the Place du Panthéon, for the actual purpose of settling the question of insurrection, which indeed under any circumstances was only one of time. By an artful move, to take place previously, it was so combined that the resolution to appeal to the god of the barricades should be made to seem to depend on acts of the Government—for the worst party pays unconscious homage to the spirit of peace and humanity by desiring to appear to be provoked. The combatant ever seeks to have the sun at his back!

A large body of workmen went to the Luxembourg, the seat of the Executive Commission of Government, and close, as our readers know, to the Place du Panthéon, and demanded an interview with M. Marie, who as Minister of Public Works

in the Provisional Government, had organized the national *ateliers*. M. Marie, as was probably foreseen, refused to receive such a host, but allowed a deputation to be admitted. A few forming the deputation had an interview with this member of the Executive Commission, in which they conducted themselves with premeditated insolence. One member of the deputation interfered so grossly while M. Marie was remonstrating, that the latter exclaimed: "Surely you do not allow yourselves to be the slaves of this man?" The compromising expression that was wanted, was now found; the deputation returned, and falsely proclaimed amongst their companions, that the Minister had called them a set of slaves. Orders were immediately issued to have about sixty persons arrested, which orders were not executed, for in point of fact, the police agents were generally disaffected. The mob outside continuing to menace under the very nose of the Government, was dispersed by the military, only to scatter over the faubourgs, and through the national *ateliers*, the perverted word of M. Marie, "slaves," which was to serve as the tocsin of insurrection, and the insurrection was resolved upon.

This, then, was the situation of things. The Revolution of February, effected by a surprize, had

to be bolstered up by a series of expedients and delusions, which led, as a matter of necessity, to a struggle, either that society might be replaced on its old footing, or carried further into fresh adventures. This supposes that there were two parties, neither of whom viewed with favour what had been established: the one wishing a return to, if not to a past order of things, at least to a past order of ideas; the other desiring to launch into the unknown. If the latter party did not exist, the Republic would probably have fallen before the regularly organized determination of the former. The fear of losing all Government, and of seeing society thrown into a state of chaos, kept the friends of order to the side of the Republic, but with a dearth of zeal, which gave great advantage to the insurrection.

It was only, when it was seen that society was menaced with barbarism—that the two hours' pillage, threatened in the Assembly, on the day of the invasion of the 15th of May, was literally to be accomplished—that the rich quarters of Paris, comprising the 1st and 2nd arrondissements, at one side of the water, and the 10th, or aristocratic Faubourg St. Germain at the other, were doomed to fire, blood, and rapine—that the National Guards rose against the barricades, which their apathy allowed to be erected.

The National Guards cared little for the Government, but they did care for society. We are now to seek the causes of this apathy of the middle classes, in the very debate, that by a singular coincidence, opened on the evening of Thursday, the evening preceding the insurrection, although the subject, in its simple prosaic designation, will hardly strike the reader as having the magnitude that really did belong to it: the debate was on a project of law, introduced by the Government for the resumption of railways by the State.

The principle of forming companies for the carrying on of public works, was but little understood in France only a few years ago. So little, indeed, had the French advanced in commercial enterprize, that England, Germany, and even Belgium, hardly divided by a perceptible boundary from France, were covered with railways, before this great country, pretending to take the lead in civilization, could exhibit more than a few leagues of rail connecting Versailles and St. Germain, with the capital. The cause lay chiefly in the habits, that the system of centralization had rooted in the people, of an entire dependence on the Government for the execution of public works. The Government of which Marshal Soult was the head, and Messrs. Guizot and Duchâtel the animating and virtual chiefs, determined to introduce the English

principle of *association,* as it is now called, for the carrying on of great enterprizes, and to begin their experiments with railways. The principle had, like most new principles, to be connected with the old. The Government struck out the whole scheme of railways, executed, through the instrumentality of its own admirably organized corps of engineers of the *ponts et chaussées,* the preliminary surveying; undertook to execute all scientific works, such as tunnelling and earth-works, and masonry; and then invited the formation of public companies, for taking by public biddings, the several lines, on condition of laying down rails, building carriages, and station houses, and working the traffic for a given series of years.

The idea was good; for if the principle once took, there could be no doubt of its extension to other undertakings, and France would find herself eventually launched into those grand commercial enterprizes, which employ the activity that used to be wasted in military contests. The French owing to the great subdivision of property, and their little acquaintance with the new principle, were rather indifferent at first, and it so happened, that their more enterprizing and richer, and in this respect at all events, better informed neighbours, the English, became the shareholders and proprietors of some of the first lines that were made. The advantages

became so apparent, that the apathy manifested at first, turned into a fury of speculation. The Bourse became so crowded that an early attendance was requested for those who wished to secure a corner in this handsome temple of Mammon. The days of Law and of Mississippi fury were revived, and the summer of 1846, when England was bitten with the railway mania, saw France running wild in the same career of grasping delusion.

It must be confessed, that in the vast market of railway share buying and selling, the greater number were actuated by a mere love of gambling, and the corruption of which the public press was so vehemently complaining, received so great a stimulus from this new method of gratification, that it served to excite a prejudice against the system, and to attach a large party the more strongly to the old plan of centralization. The readiness of the French to take to gambling was not evidenced by the sole historical example of what took place under the Regency of the Duc d'Orléans; a similar fury prevailed at the time of the great Revolution, and was exercised even under the Terror, with desperate effrontery in the matter of flour and bread, the excessive scarcity of which, made them regarded as most precious in the sense of gambling materials. It is probably in consequence of the manifestation of this disposition, that the Puritans of the Repub-

lican party have ever discouraged the introduction of speculation, which they think diverts the people from the exercise of their warlike instincts, on which they fancy that the influence of France and her greatness depends.

The duel between Girardin and Carrel, had its rise in the severity with which the latter dealt with the former, because he treated newspapers on commercial principles, to the degradation of the press. The successors of Carrel in the *National*, proved determined enemies to the introduction of the principle of association, and contended that the State ought to make the railways, and apply the profits to the benefit of the State. Such doctrine was but little attended to. The principle of association prevailed, and when the Revolution of February broke out, the savings of the trading classes were found to be extensively invested in railway undertakings. When the Republicans in power manifested a disposition to take the railways into their hands, it may be said, that they were acting consistently on their own doctrines; but it may be with force advanced on the other hand, that there is a wide difference in the situation which presents itself before and after the *fait accompli*. Property had run into that channel, and had settled in it, and could not be diverted without inconvenience and loss. A great portion of the property belonged to Englishmen,

and was secured by public faith, and there had grown. up ties between the English and French commercial classes of so beneficial a character, that it would be unwise to tear them asunder. Such a disturbance of affairs could not take place without causing deep dissatisfaction to all whose interests were either mediately or immediately involved. But it so happened, that the previous financial acts of the Republican Government were such as took out of view and destroyed the benefit of principle, on which they might otherwise have claimed to have acted, and placed this measure in the light of one more desperate expedient, added to the long series of make-shifts by which they were trying to keep society from falling asunder. A remedy, in fact, of that sort which only becomes another form of disease.

It was not the railway question alone that was before the public. A few days previously the Finance Minister gave notice of an intention on the part of the Government, to take up Insurance Companies, and become themselves the life-insurers and insurers against accidents by fire, for all France. This measure was more startling than even that connected with railways. Taken by itself, the railway resumption plan might have been defended on special grounds, but this measure affecting Insurance Companies, carried with it a

principle, which would have justified the State in abolishing all public companies of every nature and kind, or rather of seizing upon and appropriating their carefully elaborated machinery, for the sake of turning private profits into State revenue, with an augmentation beyond all bounds of State patronage. The question how far corruption, keeping pace with augmented means of patronage, would not be worse than any prejudice derivable from private speculation, may be left out of view, for sake of the alarming Communist principle involved in such schemes.

The main doctrine of the Communists and Socialists, it needs to be borne in mind, for carrying out their principles, consists in throwing the whole direction of the community upon the Government. There is this much simplicity in Communism, that it accepts fully and without reserve or qualification all the consequences of its principles. Society had never to deal with a foe of more straightforward audacity. If all men are to have an equal share of all property, there must exist somewhere a superintending power, charged with the surveillance of this distribution. It is from this power, be it called State or Government, that property must be derived, and in whose hands property must settle.

In a Communist State, which is democracy carried to its extreme consequences, the Government would be the managers of the firm, a chosen Committee or Board of Directors, and as such should be the chiefs of all enterprises, the receivers of all profits, and the declarers of the shares to each and all alike. There is this advantage in dealing with Communism, that no time need be frittered away in preliminary explanations. We know what we have to deal with. The arguments turn upon consequences and results, for there is no difficulty in the statement of premises. Now as this Communism hovered over the Republic—as it was its danger, as well as the danger of Society—any step made in advance towards it by the Republican Government, gave evidence of fear, or compromise, or treacherous intent, and filled society with trebly increased alarm.

The railway resumption plan taken in connexion with the Insurance Company seizure plan, and read by the light which the latter threw upon it, took a moral magnitude, of the most fearful proportions. These two measures were the application, so far as they went, of the means indicated by the Communists, for the political carrying out of their plans with regard to society. The Government would have shrunk perhaps from the admission

that any such principle had entered its head. But it is no comfort to society to be told that Government is blind to the extent to which a false principle, no matter how unconsciously adopted, may lead it. No one would have believed that having seized upon one public company for sake of its profits, it would not seize upon another and another; and this effect would at least have followed, that having, by the resumption of railways, destroyed the spirit of association, as borrowed from England and applied by the Monarchy, and having banished foreign capital, the Government would also have destroyed private companies or firms for commercial purposes, and reduced commerce to mere huxtering. The Government had, on sundry occasions, marked its hostility to what it was pleased to denominate the aristocracy of finance. It had declared, that it had no bowels of compassion for capitalists. The Finance Minister drew a line of distinction between the claims of the depositors of money in Savings' Banks, and those who had discounted the Treasury bills.

The former were treated with more consideration than the latter, because it was presumed that the holders of Treasury bills could not be poor. Be the fact true or false, it mattered not, a principle was let loose, and in language and tone, that

showed hostility to capitalists. And whatever feeling of justice or humanity might have lain in the distinction between the two classes of plundered Savings' Bank depositors, and plundered and withall insulted Treasury bond-holders, this feeling was neutralized by the concession that it implied to Communists, Socialists, and Red Republicans, all of whom, however differing on other points, were agreed in their war against capital.

The discouragement under which the middle classes were labouring, at the moment when the insurrection broke out, may account for the apathy manifested by the National Guards in the first instance, and for the ease with which the insurgents were allowed to make barricades. The question was as we have before indicated, introduced on Thursday, the 22nd of June, and after an elaborate debate, adjourned to the following day. Thus, while the insurgents were preparing for their battle, the state of parties in Paris was such, as to authorize their encouraging the wildest hopes. All who could leave Paris had gone. All wealthy strangers had quitted in fear and disgust. All wealthy natives, had with few exceptions, retired to their chateaux. Commerce was dead; the middle classes profoundly discouraged, and estranged from the Government; the police filled with the disaf-

fected myrmidons of Caussidière; the feelings of the National *Garde Mobile,* formed of the *enfants de Paris,* and turned into a civic form to take them out of harm's way, suspected. The Government itself without moral force, tampering with the enemies of society on the one hand, and showing hostility to the *bourgeoisie* on the other; the workmen without employ; the idle, the disaffected, the licentious, the hardened convict, all swept and gathered into licensed gangs, armed and practised in the use of arms; moved by the mysterious orders of Clubs, with the traditional revolutionary prestige that hung over the names of Jacobins, and Rights of Man; officered by the officers of the national *ateliers,* whom they were accustomed to obey, and commanded by well-skilled leaders. For the fanatical, there was the kindling abstraction of Communism; for the licentious, the wealthy or reputed wealthy quarters of the city for plunder, and the freest reading of the rights of the assailants of a sacked city.

The greatest crisis in the history of modern civilization had come; and if we might be allowed to put into abstract forms, and as it were, spiritual incarnation, those great communities whose interests were involved in the battle of June, we might imagine the genius of Berlin, and of Frankfort, and of Vienna, and of all those historical cities of

Italy, so full of accumulated treasures, the bequests of ages, watching and waiting the result of a struggle, on which depended the widest spread desolation and mourning, and whose sole chance of cure, would rest in another irruption of northern barbarism—the spear of the Cossack to cut the proud flesh of degraded minds and morals.

CHAPTER XXII.

INSURRECTION OF JUNE—FIRST DAY, THE 23rd—THE ASSEMBLY.

WHEN the Assembly met on Friday, the 23rd of June, at one o'clock, the barricades had already been raised, and blood had flowed. The insurrection had begun. Its extent was not, however, known, and its real nature but imperfectly understood. Business was proceeded with as if nothing was occurring out of doors of more importance than a vain disturbance, which would be easily suppressed. It was not until General Lebreton, who, having disposed of a question relating to pensions, made a proposition that a deputation should go amongst the troops, that a hint of the real state of things was dropped. The proposition was received with marks of impatience, especially from the ultra-democratic benches, and a series of notices of laws, and drafts of decrees,

were read, of the coldest and most unexciting description. In the midst of an uninteresting conversation, the President begged to interrupt proceedings to make a communication, which was, that news of a most unsatisfactory kind had reached him from all parts of Paris. Two barricades, that had been raised in the Rue Planche-Mibray, a street near the Hôtel-de-Ville, had been taken by the Republican and National Guards, marching together, and the barricades raised on the boulevards and quays had been demolished without much trouble. There had been some firing at the Porte St. Denis. The Garde Mobile at the post Bonne Nouvelle had spontaneously fired on the insurgents. It was said that some shots had been fired from windows in the Rue de la Hachette. The Hôtel-de-Ville was surrounded by an imposing force, and, in general, the *émeute* had met but little sympathy from the population.

Having made this satisfactory communication, the President of the Assembly withdrew, in order to return, as he said, to his post; and the Assembly, with well-assumed *sang froid*, resumed the debate on the railways resumption, which the *bourgeoisie* called, in their hearts, the Railway Robbery Bill. The discussion had made some progress, when it was interrupted by the appearance of M. Flocon, Minister of Commerce, who wished to inform the

Assembly, in order to satisfy some questions he had heard raised, that the members of the Executive Commission were at that moment seated in council within the precincts of the Assembly, naturally become the centre of action, in order to watch the course of events outside. The Minister proceeded to say, that the insurgents were composed of all the enemies of the Republic, pushed on by the hands of the foreigner, and sustained by foreign gold. For this audacious assertion, by the way, the British Ambassador demanded and obtained an apologetic explanation from the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who in a letter, handsomely acknowledging the good faith of the English in all late occurrences, threw his colleague unceremoniously overboard.

M. de Falloux next rose to present a decree for the dissolution of the national *ateliers*. It is a curious coincidence, that the Assembly should be engaged in two measures, the one so hateful to the *bourgeoisie*, the other giving the last blow to the illusions of the working people, on the very day that both classes were in arms against each other. M. Corbon presented a decree that he deemed calculated to take the sting out of that proposed by M. de Falloux, and which went to authorize associations by workmen, for the sake of carrying on enterprizes on their own account—the State making advances of money in the first instance, in order to encourage

such attempts. This led to a confused and angry discussion, showing how little the proposition was generally relished, and it ended in an understanding that a day would be fixed for debating the matter. This incident being over, the President announced that he had received several letters from the Prefect of Police. They were to the same effect as that which had been made previously, and pointed to a prompt suppression of the *émeute*. M. Creton then presented himself with a project of law, the object of which was to call on the ex-Provisional Government for an account of expenses—a sore and irritating point—which threw the friends of Ledru-Rollin into a passion. This matter was disposed of by reference to the Financial Committee, and the debate on the Railways Resumption Bill was regularly resumed. Three long speeches, stuffed with figures and calculations, had actually been made in the coolest possible fashion. A worthy citizen representative was at length interrupted by the entry of the Executive Commission of Government, with General Cavaignac. It might then have been about four o'clock; and, as if to inspire the Assembly with feelings of seriousness about interests more valuable than even railway property, a tremendous thunder-storm began. At first the thunder-claps were for a moment taken for discharges of artillery, and a panic seized all hearts. General Cavaignac

asked leave to speak, and the tribune was vacated by the railway orator, not to be resumed again. The General, in a low, mild voice, which is now remembered as remarkable by those who were present, mentioned that the insurrection had begun in the faubourgs St. Denis and St. Martin; that troops had been sent there sufficient to maintain order; and that there was nothing of any consequence to be apprehended for the moment in that quarter. There was still insurrection and strife in the Rue St. Antoine, and part of the Rue St. Jacques; but measures had been taken to conquer resistance, and he hoped soon to have satisfactory news to communicate. The disposition manifested by the troops, National Guards, and Garde Mobile, was excellent. As soon as this tranquillizing communication had been made, Garnier Pagès ascended the tribune. At this moment the rain fell in torrents, and beating on the slight roof of the temporary wooden building, in which the Assembly was seated, rendered it necessary for this gentleman to pitch his weak, shrill voice to its utmost stretch. His manner betrayed that there was something more serious and dangerous at work than had been indicated by the gentle demeanour of the man of war. He said that the time was come for acting, not speaking; that they should act with force and energy. Vigorous mea-

sures had been taken, and measures more vigorous still were in contemplation.

It was generally expected that a speech so vehemently delivered, and so charged with promises of vigour, and menaces of punishment, would have terminated by the announcement that Paris was declared in a state of siege. But, no!—there were words, and nothing but words; gesticulation, and nothing but gesticulation. Action!—the action of mountebankism; and the Government sank in estimation.

M. de Lamartine made a short speech, which sounded like a call for confidence in the Government. The President of the Assembly proposed that they should sit *en permanence;* and as this was so far a practised resolution, it tended to settle the wildness and uncertainty with which the Assembly was filling. M. Bonjean urged that the representatives should go amongst the troops, and his persistance caused a tumult, which was put an end to by a suspension of the sitting till eight o'clock.

In order to understand what had been passing, and that we may be able to pursue the proceedings of the Assembly, with which we have chiefly to do, we will proceed to take a view of the insurrection.

Any one who has viewed Paris from an elevated

point will recollect, that the banks of the Seine, on which the city is built, rise to a considerable height on each side of the river. The insurgents took up a position which extended from the Barrières Rochechouart and Poissonnière, lying close to each other, on a very high point of the right bank, to the Panthéon, situated on the highest elevation of the left bank. The barrières on the right bank, and the Panthéon on the left, formed the fortified wings of the insurgent army. The main body lay in the Faubourg St. Antoine, which was the citadel of the insurrection. The principal object of the insurgents was to gain the Hôtel-de-Ville; above which their main line, cutting the city in almost two equal parts, would have run.

If we suppose the insurgents to descend the right bank, by the Rue Faubourg St. Martin and Rue St. Martin on the right, they would pass through the Rue Planche Mibray a little in advance of the Hôtel-de-Ville; and if we suppose the insurgents to descend from the Panthéon by the Faubourg St. Jacques and the Rue de la Cité, and crossing the bridge, they would meet exactly face to face, and give each other the hand. An insurgent body, descending at the same time by the Rue St. Antoine, would take the Hôtel-de-Ville in the rear; and that building, regarded as the head-quarters of all revo-

lutionary government, would be enveloped, and the victory won.

General Cavaignac knew beforehand the nature of the battle he would have to fight. He was aware that the Club leaders openly boasted of having an army of 100,000 men, composed chiefly of the national *ateliers*, and that a struggle had been resolved upon. He had determined in his own mind not to pursue the errors that had been committed by the Generals of Charles X. and Louis-Philippe; and he substituted a plan of concentration of troops for one of dissemination. This plan he submitted to his friends, General Bedeau and General de Lamoricière, and it received their approbation. Taking his measures accordingly, orders were issued to the troops stationed in the different barracks in the immediate neighbourhood of the city, that they should, as soon as they received intimation respectively of the *émeute* having broken out, march directly to the positions specifically understood, and which were the Hôtel-de-Ville and the National Assembly. These orders were obeyed with such precision, that the soldiers passed through the barricades which they found erected in their way, without stopping to throw them down; so that at an early hour of the day the General had his troops under his hand, while orders were transmitting by the

telegraph for reinforcements of soldiers and National Guards; so that, should it have so happened that he could not hold the city, he would have retired outside, and awaited the arrival of those succours that he knew to be on their way. The soldiers were provided with provisions for some days, and the cavalry had ample provender for their horses. We saw the General at the Assembly at four o'clock, which he immediately left to commence active operations, by marching at the head of seven battalions, taken from the forces concentrated at the National Assembly, to the relief of General de Lamoricière, who was engaged in the Faubourg St. Martin. Why he took that direction is plain. The Hôtel-de-Ville was protected, because it was one of the points of concentration; there were considerable forces on the left bank, because the Luxembourg, which was the seat of Government, lay close to the Panthéon, and could not on any account be allowed to fall into the hands of the insurgents. His first concern would then be for General de Lamoricière, who was engaged in the faubourgs of the right bank, into which he had marched in the morning, at the head of a small force of a couple of thousand men. His intention was to leave some of those troops with Lamoricière, and then proceed to other points. He found, however, that whilst the latter was contending with the insurgents in the Faubourg St. Martin the Faubourg du

Temple had risen on his right, and it became necessary for General Cavaignac to cover that General's menaced flank.

A canal runs across the Faubourg du Temple, over which there is a bridge for carriages; and, raised to a considerable elevation, there is another bridge for pedestrians, in order that they should not have to wait while the lower bridge would be opened to allow boats to pass. At this place the houses form a semi-circle at each side, from which streets radiate, and these streets were barricaded, and some of the houses held by the insurgents. General Cavaignac mounted this high bridge, and for several minutes was the mark for showers of bullets, while he coolly took observations. He descended unhurt.

On ascending the Faubourg du Temple, you come to the Rue St. Maur, on the right; and as the street runs directly into the Faubourg St. Antoine, the citadel of the insurrection, it became of the utmost importance to the insurgents to bar the passage, and they did so with an almost impregnable barricade. It resisted a cannonade of several hours, during which nearly all the men at the guns were killed, as well as the horses. The first gun was for a moment abandoned, and then a second gun was brought up. So obstinate was the resistance, that General Cavaignac had to send for reinforcements to General Lamoricière; and it required a move-

ment, by which the barricade was turned, before it fell into the hands of the troops.

Not far from this street, General Foucher, attacking barricades near the Barrière de Belleville, was wounded, and General François received his death. A horse was shot under Pierre Bonaparte. Four superior officers were wounded. At this time General Lamoricière had conquered, apparently, the insurrection in the faubourgs. The first shot that had been fired on the right bank was at the Porte St. Denis, some time about eleven o'clock in the morning. The barricade was taken by the National Guards; and by the time that Lamoricière came up, the affair was over. Having entered the faubourg, which he cleared with extraordinary vigour (for the courage of the General was most heroic throughout) he turned to the left into the Faubourg Poissonnière, across which an immense barricade had been raised, from which the insurgents were beaten into the Place Lafayette, in which is situated the magnificent church of St. Vincent de Paul, and near it the *débarcadère* of the Northern Railway. This place forms a circle, from which streets radiate, all of which were barricaded and defended from the houses as well; here the battle raged for an hour and a half, and the insurgents, beaten, fell back on La Villette; so that, at the time General

Cavaignac had to call on Lamoricière for assistance, the latter was in possession of the Faubourgs St. Martin, St. Denis, and Poissonnière.

At ten o'clock at night the sitting of the Assembly was resumed for the purpose of receiving a report from General Cavaignac. The gallant General, in his accustomed quaint way, stated that he regretted that he had not complete details to afford them. He had counted upon being able to remain all day in the neighbourhood of the Assembly to receive the different reports, but so serious a resistance had broken out in the Faubourg du Temple, that he had felt it his duty to lead there the greater part of the forces that were around the Assembly. He could not therefore tell what had passed in the Rue St. Antoine, or in the Rue St. Jacques, but he would go there directly, and communicate his information to the Assembly. At that moment the troops were masters of the Boulevards to within a quarter of a league of the Temple, without having met any serious resistance. The resistance had been more serious in the Faubourgs Poissonnière, St. Denis, St. Martin, and especially in the Faubourg du Temple. General Lamoricière and General Lafontaine had, with the troops he had left them, been able to master the three first-named faubourgs. The resistance in the

fourth, so unfortunately energetic, had been completely surmounted. The portions of the town between the Boulevards and northern barriers were, to his knowledge, subdued in point of fact—but he had no doubt the insurgents would recommence if left to themselves. Measures had however been taken to prevent them.

Having made this communication, the General disappeared. M. Garnier Pagès added some further information. He said that M. Arago had marched at the head of the troops engaged in the twelfth Arrondissement (the Panthéon quarter), that he had mounted several barricades, in order to parley with the insurgents; that having vainly summoned them to surrender, he was obliged to have recourse to cannon; that at that moment the insurgents had possession only of a few points in the eleventh and twelfth Arrondissements, and he had no doubt that General Damesme, who commanded in that quarter, would the next morning extinguish the insurrection on that side. He mentioned that he had himself been over from the first to the eighth Arrondissements inclusive, and could say that throughout the circulation was free. M. de Lamartine had accompanied General Cavaignac in the Faubourg du Temple, and shared his dangers. He paid a like compliment to General Lamoricière, and stated

that he had no doubt that the only barricades on that side, those of the Faubourg St. Antoine, would be taken in the morning. He announced that General Thomas, commanding the National Guards, had been wounded. General Bedeau, commanding at the Hôtel-de-Ville, had also been wounded. Two members of the Assembly, M. Dornès and M. Bixio had both been grievously wounded, (the former mortally), and he concluded with an assurance of the persevering activity of the Government.

After he had spoken, M. Degoussée demanded the arrest of the anarchical Journalists, and some called for the state of siege, on which M. Duclerc, the Finance Minister, who also had been present at the Faubourg du Temple, rose and said, that the Government would not have recourse to a *coup d'état*. It being then midnight the sitting was declared suspended until eight o'clock the following morning.

When General Cavaignac left the Assembly, he proceeded immediately to the Hôtel-de-Ville, where he found General Bedeau, who had been wounded at seven o'clock, and having received from him an account of the measures that had been taken to clear the environs of this great centre of operations, he remitted the command to General Duvivier. A more judicious appointment could not have been

made, for it was this officer who had organised the *Garde Mobile,* which was in much force on this point.

General Cavaignac next proceeded to the Sorbonne, the head-quarters of General Damesme, to whom was committed the command of the left bank, and he found this gallant officer, fated to fall the next morning, quietly seated on a *borne* of the Rue de la Harpe. The interview between these two soldiers in that ancient narrow street, remarkable for possessing the remains of the Roman baths of the Emperor Julian, hallowed as the highway of ecclesiastical and philosophical scholarship, and now the Boulevard of more savage barbarians than those who extinguished Roman civilization—this interview was more interesting than that which awaited the Minister of War on his visiting the Presidency of the Assembly at two o'clock in the morning.

We have already had glimpses of some members of the Provisional Government: M. de Lamartine braved the barricades like a soldier; M. Garnier Pagès scampered through the streets, making speeches to the National Guards; both one and the other had to encounter the most chilling regards and cold dissatisfaction. The sensitive poet, it is said, would gladly have retrieved his errors

by a glorious death. We shall find that fine old man, and great master of science, M. Arago, acting with his usual energy, but for the present we must accompany General Cavaignac. Having reached the Presidency, and done there what was necessary, he was about to leave for his last station, the War Office, his official residence, but his departure was opposed by M. Ledru-Rollin. That gentleman's history for some hours previous, presents a curious picture of earthly purgatorial misery.

As it was necessary for some member of the Executive Commission to remain at his post, M. Ledru-Rollin did not quit the Presidency, nor did M. Marie; but unfortunately for the former, the National Guards conceived the suspicion that he was deep in the conspiracy, and instead of being treated as a governor, he was regarded rather as a prisoner, desirous of making his escape. He was harassed with questions, to which he could give no answer in absence of the War Minister, and his ignorance was treated as hypocrisy. It was well that he escaped safe and sound, for a member of the Assembly, M. de Maleville, nearly fell a victim to an unfortunate resemblance which he bore to the unpopular Executive Commissioner. The cool General Cavaignac did not afford the victim—relieved by his presence—the satisfaction of a

sympathising state of excitement; he answered briefly and with propriety, according to his conception of duty under such grave circumstances, and when Ledru-Rollin protested against his going away, and leaving him exposed to a renewal of danger, he threw himself on a sofa, and sought for a revival of energy in a short sleep.

Having followed the operations on the right bank, and kept in view the imposing figure of Cavaignac—the man destined to save French society in its greatest hour of peril, we now propose to notice the corresponding movements of the insurgents on the left bank. We have already mentioned, that supposing the insurgents of the right bank to descend the Rue St. Denis, and the insurgents of the left to descend the Rue St. Jacques, they would both meet immediately above the Hôtel-de-Ville, at the Pont Notre-Dame; but to reach this bridge, there is another bridge to be crossed, leading still in pretty nearly a right line from the Faubourg St. Jacques to the Rue de la Cité, this intermediate street being on an island. It became important to defend this bridge, called St. Michel, and here, consequently, one of the severest engagements of the first day was fought. At an early hour of the morning, the 11th Legion of National Guards assembled before the Luxembourg, where

they remained several hours in a state of inaction, during which such excited controversies prevailed amongst them, that a collision was apprehended. To put an end to such a state of anarchy in a legion of that force to which the defence of society was entrusted, a Captain of the 3rd Company marched to the scene of action, followed by the 4th Company, the officers of the latter being many of them Red Republicans. They marched to the Pont St. Michel, on which they took up their station, close to that gloomy receptacle in which are exposed bodies found murdered, called the Morgue. From this they could perceive that on another bridge, a little lower down, called from its small size the Petit Pont, which connects the quay with the Hôtel-Dieu, and Notre-Dame, an enormous barricade had been raised, upwards of eight feet in height, and so strongly built that it could only be destroyed by cannon.

At this time a company of soldiers appeared, and while the officers were deliberating firing was heard. A detachment of the Garde Républicaine had attacked the barrier from the side of the hospital. Instead of proceeding to make a diversion, the officers of the National Guards began to dispute, some shewing that their sympathies were with the insurgents, and the opportunity was lost, for after a

fight of about twenty minutes the Garde Républicaine withdrew. The Captain of the soldiery called on such of the National Guards as were well-disposed to join him, to advance against the barricades which protected that end of the Faubourg St. Jacques. The attack was made, and the barricade was found to be impregnable, except to cannon. All this time, General Bedeau was attacking the barricades around the Hôtel-de-Ville, while General Damesme was clearing the neighbourhood of the Sorbonne, and the approaches to the Panthéon—which was destined subsequently to be attacked—with the intention then of uniting their forces eventually, for a move on the Faubourg St. Antoine on the one side, while General Lamoricière came down from the other.

It was to General Damesme that M. Arago joined himself, and acted in the way described in the communication made to the Assembly by M. Garnier Pagès. It was in the Rue des Mathurins that M. Arago mounted a barricade, and summoned the insurgents to surrender; but having failed to produce effect, a piece of cannon was brought up, and the barricade was taken. At nightfall, the barricade of the Petit Pont, already described, was taken with cannon, and the bridge and quay of Saint Michel occupied by the troops of General Bedeau.

There had been killed in the course of this day, on the side of the Government thirty-five, and one hundred and sixty wounded, although the fighting had not commenced before twelve o'clock, and was over for the day at eight o'clock. It was evident that the fighting would be renewed next day, and that cannon would have to play a conspicuous part in the battle. Orders were accordingly issued by General Cavaignac to have cannon and ammunition brought in from the great arsenal of Vincennes, but it was no easy matter to accomplish such a task. The expeditionary party were obliged, for the purpose of diverting suspicion, and of not losing time by attacking barricades, to make a journey of four leagues and a half on going, and nearly five returning, being about three times the ordinary distance. Such then was the state of Paris on the nights of the 23rd—24th of June.

On one side of the Seine, the insurgents preparing to regain the advantages they had lost; on the other, the General ready to open the morning with the siege of the Panthéon. The inhabitants of one half of the city, ignorant of the formidable forces in the hands of the other half, who would, if victorious, exercise their power with the merciless brutality of the conquerors of a sacked city. The members of the National Assembly, preparing in

their agitated beds, to give the last blow to a discredited Government. General Cavaignac calmly awaiting the progress of measures, the effect of which he had calculated with the science of genius. And in the dawn of the summer morning, a watchful expeditionary party moving on Paris, with artillery charged with the merciless thunderbolts of man.

END OF VOL. I.

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